

**Revisiting the Quest for Authenticity: The Role of Cultural Capital in
the Consumption of ‘day-to-day’ Experiences**

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Abstract

Background: *Authenticity has been positioned as a central theme in contemporary marketing, and is commonly studied from one of three ontological viewpoints (object, constructed, existential). It has been argued that these three viewpoints and subsequent definitions of authenticity are irreconcilable, but more recently several authors have suggested that they should be viewed as complementary. A review of the literature revealed that studies of authenticity, regardless of which ontological perspective is taken, tend to be based on the object-authentic logic that contemporary society is inherently inauthentic, and thus see the consumption of authenticity as a ‘quest’ outside of homogenised and ‘inauthentic’ contemporary society. This thesis addresses these shortcomings by presenting a theoretical framework highlighting the interconnected nature of the three ontological viewpoints; and exploring the consumption of authenticity in a relatively mundane ‘day-to-day’ context. The notion of cultural capital is put forward as a means of better understanding the process of deriving authenticity through the consumption of object-inauthentic offerings.*

Aim: *The aim arrived at through the literature review is to “explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences.”*

Method: *This thesis adopts an interpretivist ontology and ethnographic methodology. An argument is presented that the idiosyncratic consumption processes of consumers is best understood through qualitative inquiry. Data is collected through introspection, informal interviews, and participant observation.*

Conclusions: *A theoretical framework is put forward which shows the interrelationships between the three ontological conceptualisations of authenticity, suggesting that these should be seen not as contradictory definitions, but complementary sources of authenticity. Cultural capital and related idiosyncratic consumption practices is found to impact perceptions of authenticity, and results suggest that consumers are able to utilise their capital to extract authenticity in ‘day-to-day’ consumption experiences. The findings also suggest that an inability to perceive existential authenticity can negate sources of object authenticity, rendering the experience subjectively inauthentic.*

Future Research: *The framework put forward should be tested in additional contexts and cultural settings. The notion of a ‘quest’ for authenticity can usefully be explored outside the limitations of object-authentic reasoning, utilising cultural capital as a lens. The potential negative relationship between different sources of authenticity should be further explored.*

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Nadia – No more weekends spent writing about pubs! Let's go get a beer - we've earned it.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Conceptualising Authenticity

The importance of authenticity both culturally and as a concept is highlighted repeatedly: Lowenthal (1992: 11) proclaimed that "the cult of authenticity pervades modern life"; MacCannell (1976: 145) argued that authenticity is "the key to the development of the modern world"; while Jacknis (1990: 9) suggested that "authenticity is a general preoccupation of modern western culture". More recently, Brown (2001) positioned the tension between the in-authentic and the authentic as a central theme of modern marketing. The value of authenticity from a consumption perspective has prominence within the sociology of tourism; starting with the influential writings of Boorstin (1992 [1961]) and MacCannell (1973; 1976), it remains a much-used and debated concept to this day (Tribe and Xiao 2012; Rickly-Boyd 2013).

This thesis adds to authenticity research by exploring the role and benefits that consumers perceive when consuming authenticity in day-to-day, domestic settings. The thesis draws on the three conceptualisations of authenticity: object, constructed, and existential authenticity (Wang, 1999). Critical evaluation shows that a majority of studies on authenticity are dependent upon the ontological presuppositions associated with three conceptualisations of authenticity. First, object authenticity is extrinsic to the consumer, and whether or not something is authentic can only be determined by experts in any given domain (Trilling, 1972), the implications are that while consumers are on a 'quest' for authenticity, they are often misled – whether wilfully (Baudrillard, 1994 [1981]) or not (MacCannell, 1976). A second competing ontology is constructed authenticity, which draws upon the perceptions of the individual consumer – so that what is and is not authentic varies between consumers, and the same consumer over time (Cohen, 1988). A third ontology is existential authenticity was presented by Wang (1999) as intrinsic, and emphasising the consumer's experienced feeling of *being* authentic, which can often have nothing to do with the authenticity of the external environment (Wang, 1999).

While both constructed and existential conceptualisations of authenticity are used extensively, the majority of studies are influenced by the presuppositions of an objective-authentic logic. The argument is that contemporary society has been 'robbed' of sources of meaning and identity (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010), resulting in Western consumers seeking out authenticity in less 'modernised' societies (MacCannell, 1973; 1976). This notion of an authenticity quest is at the core of the object-authentic paradigm. However

empirical evidence from Beverland & Farrelly (2010: 852), indicates that individuals also find “authenticity in functional and ubiquitous objects. Far from needing to be rescued from mass culture ... authenticity was found in mainstream events and brands”. The conclusion is that “informants related authenticity to positive identity benefits and in so doing gave precedence to certain information cues while downplaying or ignoring others that were inconsistent with their assessment” (ibid: 853). This thesis draws on this insight and adds to it by investigating how authenticity is found and consumed by consumers in the day-to-day consumption contexts of contemporary society.

In addition, this thesis argues that the three authenticity ontologies should be viewed as commensurate. This theoretical perspective is in line with recent research (cf. Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Leigh, Peters, & Shelton, 2006; Mkono, 2012). The position of the thesis is that source of authenticity can operate independently but that within context of day-to-day consumption an understanding of their interrelationships is important (Belhassen et al., 2008; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). This thesis contributes a framework, derived from the literature, which shows how the three concepts relate to each other in the process of consuming authenticity for identity purposes.

Further, to understand the processes at play within authenticity consumption, this thesis draws on Bourdieu’s (1984) theories the field of consumption and cultural capital. Following Arsel & Thompson’s (2011) conceptualisation of fields of consumption as less rigid subcultures, and Holt’s (1998) proposed role of cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity, this thesis argues for the role of consumer perceptions in the process of authenticity consumption. Within this argument, Holt’s view of cultural capital is shown to be pivotal in understanding the link between the consumption of authenticity and the identity benefits that accrue a result of increased cultural capital.

1.2 Consuming Day-to-Day Authenticity

This thesis argues that consumers derive a sense of meaning and self-identity by amassing field-specific knowledge in areas that are congruent with their identity goals and interests, and leverage this to extract authenticity from mass-produced, mass-cultural offerings, thus further increasing their capital and existential self-authenticity. This section provides an overview of how authenticity has been employed in day-to-day consumption experiences, and the value of authenticity from a managerial perspective. It also presents a justification of the chosen research context.

1.2.1 Consumption of Day-to-Day Offerings

Few studies have been carried out with regards to sources of authenticity in relatively routine, mundane consumption practices (this is further solidified in section two of the literature review). The only exception located for this study is Beverland & Farrelly (2010: 852), who found that informants to their study “found authenticity in functional and ubiquitous objects. Far from needing to be rescued from mass culture ... authenticity was found in mainstream events and brands”. They conclude that “informants related authenticity to positive identity benefits and in so doing gave precedence to certain information cues while downplaying or ignoring others that were inconsistent with their assessment” (ibid: 853).

Beverland and Farrelly’s (2010) study was conducted by recruiting informants for semi-structured interviews and prompting conversation by (1) providing 100 images of products or experiences and discussing their authenticity; and (2) asking informants to bring to the interview objects and photographs of experiences that they consider authentic. Through these prompts, respondents provide their conceptualisations of authentic brands, products and consumption experiences. Several of the examples provided of this are of an object-authentic nature and do not explore in depth the process of consumption or personal identity outcomes thereof. For instance, several respondents reasoned that McDonald’s is authentic as it is ubiquitous and strives to create the same product offering regardless of where you purchase it (i.e. an authentic Big Mac); another argued that a car with four-wheel drive is authentic as it manages to get them to where they need to go. In these examples the concept of authenticity is of an object/functional nature, as depicted in table 1.1.

Table 1.1-Object/Functional Authenticity in Beverland & Farrelly (2010)

	No	Yes
Is the offering what it asserts to be?	Inauthentic	Authentic
Does the offering meet the consumer’s expectations of function?	Inauthentic	Authentic

In these cases Beverland & Farrelly (2010: 848) argue that e.g. “McDonald’s may not be an authentic product when seeking something healthy, but it is if one desires fast food.” This is seen by the authors as evidence of the goal-contingent view of authenticity. However, in these circumstances the use of authenticity becomes synonymous with quality judgements, i.e. whether or not the offering meets the expectations and needs of the consumer (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Leonard, 1985). In addition to these views of authenticity, the article also includes examples of consumers who meet self-identity and self-authentication goals by consuming certain experiences perceived as authentic. These include respondents’ perceptions of surfing, community activities around surfing (different respondent), and holidays to Egypt and India, as being authentic and from which they derive personal (existential) authenticity and meet identity goals. While this study provides evidence for the “link between determinations of authenticity and informant personal goals (i.e., the desire for self/authentication)” (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010: 841), the research methods used rely on respondents to recall instances of authenticity, and theorise around the authenticity of brands or hypothetical situations. This leaves a gap for research that explores the process of perceiving and consuming authenticity within the context of consumption, and the benefits derived through this process (Napoli et al., 2014).

Within sociology, Zukin (2008; 2010) provides an example of the consumption of authenticity in day-to-day experiences. Zukin’s research focuses on the consumption of extrinsic authenticity as a means of competition between groups of consumers and as an antecedent of eventual homogenisation of the physical environment. Zukin (2008; 2010) views authenticity as a finite resource. It is used up in a competitive act of consumption and ends with homogenisation. To Zukin, authenticity is extrinsic to the consumer; it can only be observed from the outside, and the more connected one is with a space, the less likely one is to call it authentic.

Zukin defines authenticity as “a continuous process of living and working, a gradual build-up of everyday experience, the expectation that neighbors and buildings that are here today will be here tomorrow” (2010: 6). In this view, authenticity exists in areas of ethnic and cultural diversity which have not undergone the modernisation associated with the inflow of new capital. This reflects an object-authentic logic, as it draws on the nostalgic view of the past as a source of authenticity which cannot be recreated in contemporary society. This leads Zukin (2010) to identify a circle of authenticity destruction. First, there is a process of attraction whereby individuals (often case young

professionals) are attracted to ‘authentic’ spaces for their grittiness: “where their parents’ generation saw dirt and anger in the asphalt jungle, young city dwellers found beauty in the tumble down and excitement in the rough” (Zukin, 2008: 726). The attraction is determined not by innate qualities, but by the individual’s anxieties towards change, as “it connects our individual yearning to root ourselves in a singular time and place to a cosmic grasp of larger social forces”.

Zukin describes how early explorers of the middle class visit a café for its authenticity-laden ambience but, disappointed with the quality of its coffee, are soon lured away by the opening of a ‘new beginnings’ (hipster-style) café in an old warehouse nearby. While the latter soon earned praise from *Rolling Stone* magazine, the former is forced to close as the process of gentrification and homogenisation impacted the authentic. The presence of authenticity questers inevitably arouses the interests of corporations with deeper pockets, and soon sources of authenticity are replaced by “gentrifiers, cocktail bars, Starbucks, and H&M” (Zukin, 2010: x). This is a process of homogenisation. Zukin explains the transformatory impact of consumption upon the external environment, arguing that authenticity is destroyed through the process of gentrification. Thus Zukin argues that ubiquity and homogeneity are antithetical of authenticity.

Drawing on object-authentic logic – where historical connections are key and a nostalgic sense of ‘purity’ is painted upon that which has heritage and community roots – these arguments reflect the contemporary consumer’s quest for authenticity (MacCannell, 1976), as well as the postmodernist view that they prefer the hyperreal (Baudrillard, 1994 [1981]). Zukin’s also follow a Bourdieuan logic in its view of the consumption of authenticity as a competition for power between the authentic consumers, those with origins and who have “the right to inhabit a space, not just to consume it as an experience,” versus the ‘new-beginnings’ consumers who seek the experience. Bourdieu (1984) conceptualised fields as areas of competition for symbolic capital. However, Zukin’s (2008; 2010) view does not account for the possibility of leveraging symbolic, and particularly cultural, capital to extract authenticity from that which is *not* objectively authentic, which does not have heritage. This further emphasises the need for studies that take into account the roles and interactions of different conceptualisations of authenticity, as argued in section two of the literature review and summarised in figure 2.3-4.

1.2.2 Day-to-Day Authenticity and Marketing

This section anchors the value of authenticity from a managerial perspective by exploring how authenticity has been linked to benefits such as loyalty (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) and increased expenditure (Brida, Disegna, & Osti, 2013; Chhabra et al., 2003). These studies effectively answer the questions of why authenticity is of concern to organisations, and how understanding consumers' perceptions, motivations and processes of consuming authenticity can bring value to an organisation.

Authenticity is shown to be of value from both a managerial (i.e. Castéran & Roederer, 2013; Kovács et al., 2014), where it is linked to positively to e.g. increased consumer spend and loyalty. In a consumption context the value of authenticity for the individual consumer resides in the fulfilment of identity goals and self-authentication (Beverland, Ai Ching Lim, Morrison, & Terziovski, 2006; Leigh et al., 2006).

Studies of authenticity have been particularly prominent within the multi-disciplinary academic area of tourism and heritage studies (Getz, 2008). This has produced a considerable number of studies discussing alternate theoretical approaches to defining the concept (cf. Wang, 1999) and the benefits derived by the consumer (Kovács et al., 2014). This focus has produced some confident proclamations of the importance of authenticity – e.g. “the demand for authenticity---the honest and real---is one of the most powerful movements in contemporary life, influencing our moral outlook, political views, and consumer behaviour” (Potter, 2010: i) – yet empirical evidence of managerial benefits, such as the impact of perceived authenticity on visitor behaviour and loyalty, have until recently received considerably less interest (Castéran & Roederer, 2013; Kovács et al., 2014).

While this thesis does not directly explore the benefits of perceived authenticity from a managerial standpoint, this section serves to highlight that such benefits exist. This shows that authenticity holds value not only for the consumer, but also the organisation, which further legitimises its status as an area of legitimate interest in marketing studies. Thus, while this study is concerned with the intrapersonal benefits derived from the consumption of authenticity from a marketing perspective – an area which has also been under-researched- this section provides a grounding of the managerial importance of authenticity.

Table 7. 2 (appendix) provides an overview, though not exhaustive, of studies that have investigated the organisational benefits derived from consumers' perceptions of

authenticity. Areas that were found in these studies to be affected by perceptions of authenticity are summarised in table 7.3 (appendix). As can be read from this table, findings across these studies consistently confirm that authenticity positively affects intentions to (re)visit an event, increased expenditure, event satisfaction loyalty, perceived value, intentions to consume, and predicted enjoyment.

1.3.1 The Pub: A Theoretical Justification of Research Context

This study seeks to understand the role of authenticity in relatively mundane day-to-day consumption, i.e. in the consumption of offerings – whether physical products or services – that are common to the point of mundanity, as opposed to something for which one would ‘quest’. As such, pubs are put forward as an apt research context for several reasons, each of which will be discussed briefly in this section.

First, pubs have been around, as Brown and Patterson (2000: 641) somewhat hyperbolically put it, “since time immemorial.” They are a mainstay – or ‘bastion’ – of British culture (Everitt & Bowler, 1996), acting as a meeting place for the local populace and visitors alike, with publicans themselves acting as a form of host (Clarke, Kell, Schmidt & Vignali, 1998). They are, in essence, a social consumption space with a long history and – traditionally – fairly considerable variation in execution (Maye, Ilbery & Kneafsey, 2005).

A second factor contributing to the choice of the pub as a research context for this thesis is that it has evolved considerably over the past decades in particular (Clarke et al., 1998). In other words, there is a widely accepted if not well-defined idea of a ‘real’ (object-authentic) pub as a place where emphasis was on the consumption of ale, social interaction on one’s own terms, and consisting of a space that ‘evolved organically’ rather than being planned (Clarke et al., 1998; Pratten, 2003). The use of the phrase ‘organically evolved’ by Clarke et al. (1998) provides a clear link back to section 2.4.1 and the theoretical definition of object authenticity – and Wang’s (1999) observation that proponents of object authenticity view the concept of authenticity as a whole in terms of the ‘organic’ and ‘natural’. Indeed, framing the discussion of the pub as an evolution from some form of authentic original to the current, which by its very existence is somehow deemed inauthentic by virtue simply of not being in the past, provides a clear link to several of the discussions presented previously in the literature review.

Clarke et al. (1998) are far from alone in taking this approach. Pratten (2003: 252) gives no indication as to when ‘real’ pubs were the norm, but notes that “the nature of the public

house changed. Some traditional houses may still exist, but in addition there are many others designed for different groups of people.” In his research, Pratten puts the changing nature of the pub down to increased consumer demand for entertainment (music, karaoke, pub quizzes), food, sports coverage, and atmospheres more welcoming to a ‘wider group of people’. The latter point follows a discussion on the male-dominated demographic of ‘traditional’ pubs, while newer establishments seek to attract students, women, and families (Clarke, 1998). A further example is found in Maye et al. (2005) who, while acknowledging that the traditional pub has been heavily mythologised, argue that pubs have been forced to change from an essentially undefined original state by “diversifying themselves into, for example, the provision of food, perhaps drawing on ‘cultural’ markers such as local/regional products ... as well as broadening their customer base beyond the village contour” (ibid: 832).

Maye et al. draw the idea of a ‘mythologised’ conceptualisation of the pub from Campbell (2000), who conducted an ethnography of men’s pub drinking in New Zealand. While Campbell’s study was carried out in a different national context to the current research, his findings are nonetheless worth examining more closely – not least as he frames his research around the mythology of the pub as “a nostalgic fiction of yester-year [...] they are a retreat from the brutalities of urban living.” While Campbell’s study places emphasis on the *rural* pub, which differs from the urban context of the current study, many studies on the changing nature of pubs tend to present ‘real’ pubs as serving a small, largely local, community. Indeed, in their widely-cited study, Everitt & Bowler (1996: 102) note that in “many pubs, particularly rural “country” pubs which we might expect to be more “folk-oriented,” [...] many of the customary aspects and values are slipping away, or have already been replaced.” Folk-oriented, in this context, is used as the opposite of popular-culture; the pub as it truly *was*, rather than an idealised version thereof as perpetrated in media.

To gain a greater understanding of how the pub has been described – and mythologised – in an academic context, the below table provides an overview of key characteristics noted across several studies. This leads into a discussion on the ‘changing nature’ of the pub, as argued by a majority of studies, and will be linked back to the literature on authenticity and its varying conceptualisations.

From the 1990s onward, argues Pratten (2003), pubs started to become more uniform – the individual idiosyncrasies of the traditional pub became replaced by a ‘book of styles’,

consisting of a handful of different types to which the majority of pubs would conform, whether avertedly or not. This is a sentiment that is essentially shared by Clarke et al. (1998), who argue that ‘post-modern’ pubs represent a form of hyperreality as they use the idea of pre-modern, or traditional, pubs as a ‘blueprint’ for their own design. Thus, they seek to distance themselves from the ‘modern’ pub described by Pratten (2003) and its ‘managerially developed’, ‘unreal’, and alienating aura (Clarke et al., 2003).

Interestingly, Clarke et al. (2003: 137) use the phrase “quest for reality” as a means of describing the modern pub, the adjective “reality” for pre-modern pubs, and “hyperreality” for post-modern or contemporary pubs. This again links back the conceptualisations of authenticity, and the ‘strict’ object-authentic view that the ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ must necessarily be pre-industrialised, organic, and in a sense non-deliberate. This latter point is illustrated by Clarke et al.’s description of pre-modern pubs as a place where “the better or more commercially-minded (and more sociable) home-brewers opened their doors to sell ale to a wider public,” (2003: 137); while the contemporary pub “represent a post-modern hyperreality and fragmentation of experience. These formats may well attempt to integrate aspects of the nostalgic consumer “memory” of the pre-modern “archetypical” pub, however, this can only be mimicked, not recreated” (ibid: 138).

These arguments are essentially in line with authors such as Apparundai (2000 [1986]), Arnould & Price (2000), and Zukin (2010) whose view of authenticity essentially relies on the argument that authenticity is found in the *old*, and can be consumed but not created by new ventures (Zukin, 2010, provides a particularly clear overview of this argument). It is thus interesting to note, as a point of contrast to this reasoning, the Camra (the campaign for real ale), through its *Pub Heritage* initiative. While this initiative focuses entirely on pubs that are “authentically old”, with emphasis placed on pre-war pubs in particular, they also acknowledge that authenticity is not solely dependent on the age of an establishments or its features. For instance, in its regional guide to pubs of historic importance in Scotland (2007: 88), Camra included a section on “heritage pubs of the future,” noting that “although this guide is about genuine heritage interiors in Scotland’s pubs, it would be wrong to suggest that all modern pub schemes are of no interest.” This suggests that even experts – the very same experts upon whose judgments object authenticity relies (Trilling, 1972) – appear to take a less strict view of authenticity than academic literature would suggest.

1.3.2 The Pub: A Pragmatic Justification of Research Context

Beyond the academic grounds for this choice of research context, there are several more pragmatic grounds for locating the study in pub consumption. The pub industry turned over in excess of £23bn in 2015, thus constituting an important part of the UK economy (Mintel, 2016). The industry consists of an estimated 46,750 individual pubs (Mintel, 2016), with pubs and bars generating some 330,000 employment opportunities in 2009 (People 1st, 2010). However, it is also an industry in turmoil. The Campaign for Real Ale, or Camra (2016), reports that an average of 21 pubs are closing every week as of 2016. While this represents a decline from a peak in 2009, when the number stood at 52 pubs per week (Smithers. 2014), it remains indicative of difficult trading conditions in the industry.

The underlying reasons for the continued large-scale closure of pubs are manifold, with Smithers (2014) noting that causes include profitable pubs being demolished and converted due to unfavourable planning legislation – leading to centrally located pubs being torn down in favour of supermarkets and other higher-revenue businesses. Mintel (2016) notes new guidelines on alcohol intake as another reason, with the government reducing the recommended weekly intake of alcohol. Mintel also highlights an increase prices of alcohol as a key factor – the price of spirits increased by 21.8%, and beer by 34.5%, between 2004-2010 (Mintel, 2016).

However, beyond the external economic and political factors noted above, pubs are also facing changing consumer demands and expectations. 25% of consumers reported visiting pubs less frequently, with only 9% stating the opposite (Mintel, 2016). For those who had increased their frequency, 48% reported that this was due either to improved food quality or better service and facilities. These latter points provide a link to the academic literature where, as discussed in more detail in section 1.3, with authors including Clarke, Kell, Schmidt & Vignali (1998) and Pratten (2003) noting that consumers' expectations of the pub have changed dramatically in recent times – thus creating a need for establishments to better understand consumer needs in order to compete successfully.

The outcome of this study will therefore be not only of academic value through a better understanding of the consumer 'quest' for authenticity; but also of value to the industry, through providing a better understanding of the factors that are of importance during the process of consuming these traditional, social service environments.

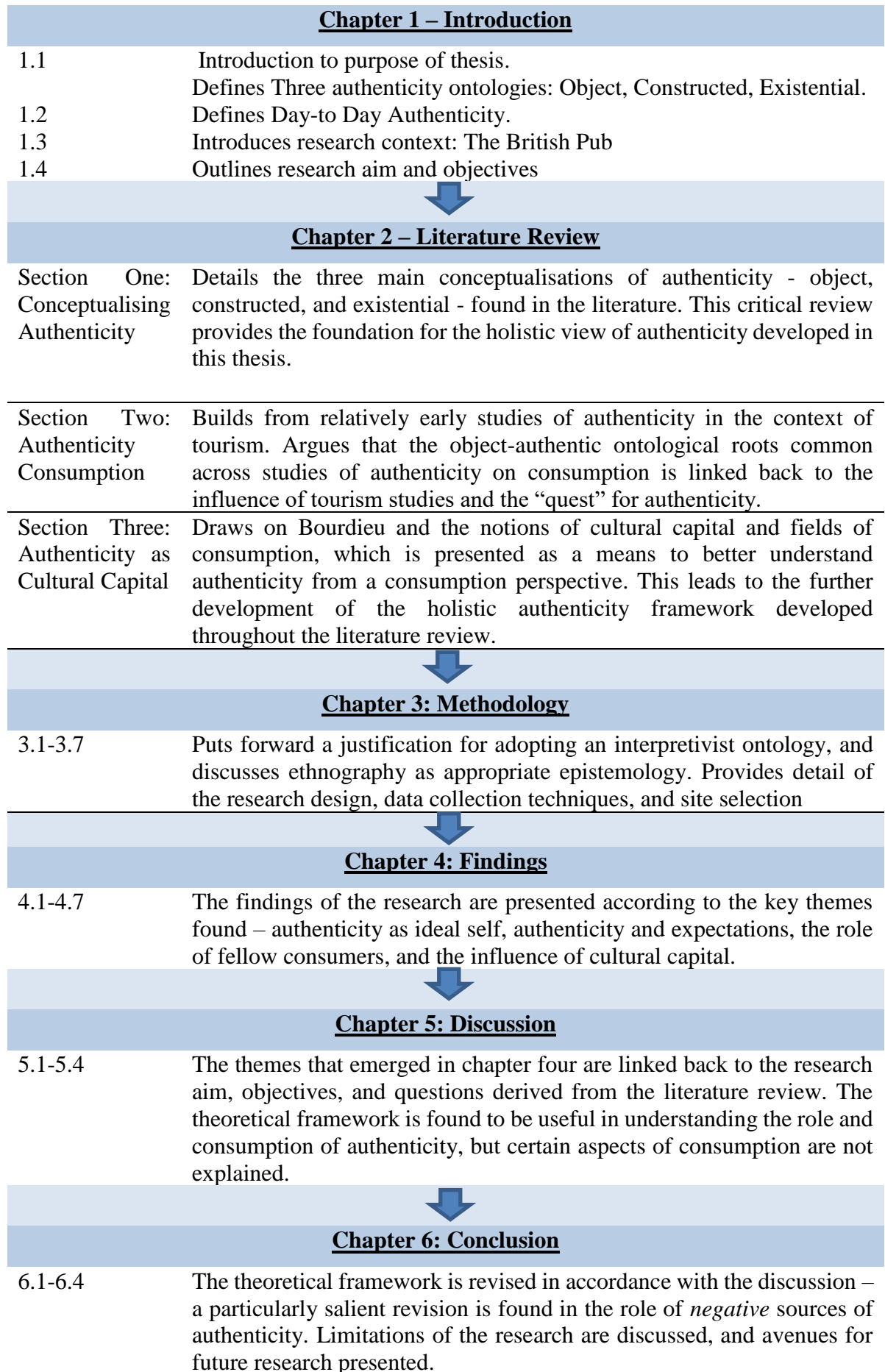
1.4 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim arrived at through the literature review is to “explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences.”

To meet this aim the research objectives are to:

- Develop a more holistic understanding of authenticity through synthesising different conceptualisations
- To generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer’s overall perception of authenticity.
- To develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity
- Provide insight into *how* consumers perceive authenticity in a specific consumption context
- Identify the identity benefits consumers derive from the process of consuming authenticity

1.5 Structure



Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review and critically evaluate theoretical definitions of authenticity from an experience consumption perspective. This analysis provides a framework within which the conceptualisations of authenticity are positioned. Drawing on this framework the aim of the chapter assesses empirical knowledge of how the different forms of authenticity interact within the process of consumption. The theoretical underpinning to this analysis is Bourdieu's (1984) theories of cultural capital and fields of consumption

There is considerable variation in the conceptualisation of authenticity both within the field of consumer research and between academic disciplines (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). However there are three conceptualisations of authenticity which have informed empirical study: objective, constructive, and existential authenticity (Belhassen et al., 2008; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Lenton, Bruder, Slabu, & Sedikides, 2013; Wang, 1999). This chapter will critically examine the nature of the empirical research within each conceptualisation and will highlight limitations and gaps in understanding in order to support the position that there is a need for a holistic approach to research the consumption of authenticity that accounts for the dimensionality of authenticity consumption.

Section 2.2 defines authenticity and examines how it been conceptualised and introduces three different conceptualisations within section 2.3 Object authenticity, 2.4 Constructed authenticity and 2.5 Existential authenticity. In the following chapter, Bourdieu's theories of consumption fields and social capital and relates these to the importance of the concept of authenticity through the accruelement of cultural capital. This is followed by an exploration of different interpretations of how authenticity is constructed, consumed and used as a resource of power and self-identity construction. Finally, in line with recent contributors to the debate, including Belhassen et al. (2008) and Wang (2007), this thesis argues that individual definitions of authenticity should be viewed as complementary and situationally symbiotic rather than necessarily contradictory (Leigh et al., 2006; Mkono, 2013). That is to say, the ontological underpinning of each conceptualisation – while theoretically and fundamentally important for our understanding of authenticity as a concept – is argued to be of limited relevance when authenticity forms part of *consumption*. In essence, emphasis is not placed on the actual

authenticity of that being consumed, but the value derived by the consumer in the act of consuming that which they perceive to be authentic – whether it is or not.

Section One: Defining and Conceptualising Authenticity

2.2 Section Introduction

This section accounts for different conceptualisations of authenticity. It begins by outlining the three most widely used conceptualisations, following the chronological order in which they emerged, thus moving from object, to constructive, and finally existential authenticity (see also Wang, 1999; Wang, 2007). Having accounted for each of these three conceptualisations, a framework is put forward which highlights the interrelationship of the three types of authenticity as they relate to consumers' process of perceiving and consuming authenticity of experience.

2.3 Defining Authenticity

There is no widely accepted academic definition of authenticity (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988; Lau, 2010; Lenton et al., 2013; Mkono, 2012; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Taylor, 2001; Trilling, 1972; Wang, 1999). This is further complicated by the semantic differences of definition founded in the widespread use of the word to describe various degrees of originality, sincerity, origin and truthfulness (Lau, 2010). Belhassen & Caton (2006: 854) note that authenticity is a 'slippery' concept, and that conceptual variation is "a source of confusion and counter-productivity." Difference in variation can be accounted for due the multi-disciplinary nature of authenticity research; authenticity has been addressed in disciplines including consumer research, curatorship, anthropology, sociology, psychology and philosophy (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

The three most commonly discussed and applied conceptualisations of authenticity are *object*, *constructive*, and *existential* (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Leigh et al., 2006; Wang, 1999). Each of these views of authenticity is discussed in greater depth in subsequent sections, but in brief terms their core principles can be summarised as:

- **Object authenticity** relates to whether an object is deemed as genuine or not in the sense of being original or what it is claimed to be (Trilling, 1972). There is no room for subjective interpretation within the objective approach, and consumers are often deceived, whether wilfully (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]) or not (MacCannell,

1973, 1976), and led to accept inauthentic objects and events as authentic. The focus of object authenticity is on the "toured object." The terminology 'toured object' has its roots in tourism contexts, where it is used as a collective term for that which is being consumed, thus highlighting the external nature of object authenticity.

- **Constructive authenticity** does not accept that there is a uniquely original reality, instead authenticity is seen as subjectively constructed continuum ranging from complete authenticity to complete falseness (Cohen, 1988). Whether an object or experience is considered by its consumer as authentic or not will vary according to their preconceptions, expectations and previous knowledge (Wang, 1999). Like object authenticity, it focuses on the toured object. However, where objective authentication is external (i.e. relies on expert knowledge), constructed authentication relies on the perceptions and knowledge of the consumer; 'sources' of authenticity thus remain external, however the authentication is internalised.
- **Existential authenticity** refers to an internal state of *being authentic* experienced by the consumer, which can be activated by certain consumption activities (Wang, 1999). As the original proponent of existential authenticity, Wang (1999: 361-364) suggests that it can be either inter-personal (focusing on authentic relationships) or intra-personal (focusing on self-making and bodily feelings). Unlike object and constructive authenticity, existential authenticity doesn't see the consumer as a recipient of external (in)authenticity based on toured objects, but focuses on the authenticity of the *self*, as experienced by the consumer.

This thesis draws on these three conceptualisations to structure the following discussion. However, it is acknowledged that there are other conceptualisations, for example the psychology-based *trait authenticity* (which focuses on longer lasting self-congruent emotions, cognitions and behaviour: Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008) and *state authenticity* (which focuses on the congruence between the 'real' self and emotions, cognitions and actions in particular situations: Lenton et al., 2013).

There are similarities between these more specialised conceptualisations and the broader typology which is used in this thesis. For instance, *existential* authenticity, put forward by (Wang, 1999) as a 'novel' understanding of authenticity, is very similar to the earlier psychological definition of state authenticity (Erickson, 1995; Lenton et al., 2013). This can be seen by comparing Wang's definition of existential authenticity with *state authenticity*

"In search of tourist experience which is existentially authentic, tourists are preoccupied with an *existential state of Being* activated by certain tourist activities. To put it another way, existential authenticity is the authenticity of *Being* [...]" (Wang 1999: 359, emphasis in original).

There are clear areas of overlap between this conceptualisation and that of Lenton et al. (2013) who define state authenticity as "... a temporary experiential phenomenon brought to the fore by situational factors" which tend to revolve around "[having] fun, engaging in familiar activities, striving for achievement, and hanging out" (2013: 17). In essence, both of these definitions focus on authenticity as a feeling experienced by an individual, as a result of a particular activity. Indeed, the main point of difference seems to be the context in which the phenomenon has been studied. Hence it seems conceivable that psychological state authenticity could fruitfully inform the more recent concept of existential authenticity, though carrying out the conceptual analysis required for this is beyond the scope of the current study. The approach of considering existential and psychological definitions of authenticity under the same category is thus taken for the purposes of this thesis.

In agreement with Mkono (2013), the stance is taken that current debates, which largely focus on the relative benefits of supposedly contentious schools of thought, have grown stale. Thus, this chapter will take an approach that follows more closely the suggestion of Kolar & Zabkar (2010: 652), who suggest that: "... different notion(s) and aspects of authenticity should not be avoided but exposed and studied even more thoroughly in order to better understand and possibly utilize them," and Belhassen et al. (2008) and Wang (2007) who argue that the various definitions of authenticity should be viewed as complementary rather than conflicting. The position is also taken that the interaction between the different forms of authenticity is not fixed but dynamic according to context.

2. Object Authenticity

Trilling (1972: 93) states that object authenticity stems from museums, "where persons expert in such matters test whether objects of art are what they appear to be or are claimed to be, and therefore worth the price that is asked for them...". Object authenticity is concerned with the authentication (see e.g. Arnould & Price, 2000; Cohen & Cohen, 2012) of *originals*. The concept of *object authenticity* is located within art criticism. For example, art historians became increasingly concerned with authenticity when technological advancements allowed for *objets d'art* to be produced or re-produced in

virtually infinite quantities (Cornet, 1975; Walter, 2008 [1936]). The majority of studies use a definition of object authenticity which is quite strict, and acknowledges only one aspect of the concept: the aforementioned authentication of originals (Cornet, 1975). Hence proponents of objective authenticity hold the ontological stance that there is a pre-existent 'truth' to be found and established – i.e. whether something is or is not authentic is not a matter of perspective but of facts external to the beholder.

Object authenticity also has a commonly ignored second aspect, which is that for something to be authentic it should be made for the right purpose (Cornet, 1975). The fact that previous research often overlooks this aspect of object authenticity creates a divide within the concept, and for the purposes of the following discussion the two sides of this will be referred to as *strict* and *sincere* object authenticity. While the concepts can beneficially be viewed together (Cornet, 1975), in this thesis they will be explored separately in the interest of clarity. There are three reasons for this approach: first, to provide clarity in the analysis of extant research into object authenticity; second, to advance that the position that *sincere* object authenticity is of greater relevance in an examination of a process-based view of consuming authenticity in the context of mass-produced, mass-cultural offerings; (3) highlighting the notion of sincerity within object authenticity provides insight into areas of overlap between object and constructed authenticity, bringing the concepts closer together.

2.4.1 *Strict Object Authenticity*

Ruskin's view was that "the machine ... could make only inauthentic things, dead things," (Trilling, 1972: 127). This link between modernity¹, commoditisation and inauthenticity is often used by curators and art historians (cf. Cohen, 1988; Cornet, 1975; McLeod, 1976). This view of contemporary, industrialised society as inauthentic serves as the fundamental assumption behind the study of authenticity: "... we have used our wealth, our literacy, our technology, and our progress, to create the thicket of unreality which stands between us and the facts of life" (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]: 3); "The concern of moderns for the shallowness of their lives and inauthenticity of their experiences parallels concerns for the sacred in primitive society" (MacCannell, 1976: 589-590). Authenticity, in the (strict) object sense, is thus an inherently modern¹ concern (Berger, 1973; Cohen,

¹ The use of the terms 'modernity' and 'modern' in this context reflects those of the authors cited; as a form of antithesis of a pre-industrialised society not yet dis-authenticated by the influences of mass-(re)production and mass-culture.

1988; Trilling, 1972), its value founded in the perceived inauthenticity of contemporary society (Taylor, 2001).

Hence this object authenticity argues for the primacy of the 'organic' and is conditional upon the degree involvement of human beings and technology in the production. For example, Gothic cathedrals are considered authentic as they were built slowly, by hand, and are thus 'organic'. Consequently object authenticity within social science, whether applied to objects, services or experiences, is at its core conservatism; a criticism of commoditisation through industrialisation (Cohen, 1988), and the proliferation of methods of production (in an inclusive sense of the word, incorporating not only physical products, but services and experiences) that allow for the (re)production of the same product, service or experience virtually *ad infinitum*.

Taking a critical stance, one might thus argue that object authenticity is derived from a utopian sense of nostalgia. Davis (1979: 18) defined 'simple nostalgia' as informed by the belief that "things were better *then* [...] than *now*" (emphasis in original). Utopianism becomes relevant as proponents of object authenticity will often rely on examples from before their own time – things were better, more authentic, in times of which they have only read or heard, but not experienced. It is, in essence, a glorification of an idealised past (See also Cross, 2016). In addition, the temporal constraints of consumption are highlighted when considering the difference between production and *reproduction*. For example, strict object authenticity is founded upon the premise that industrialisation allows for endless *reproduction*; however, this implies an original from which to produce a copy. A sceptic of object authenticity as applied in this strict sense would question whether, for instance, the very first Coca-Cola made in 1886 was in any sense more authentic than the one immediately following it in the production line, or indeed those to come out of the next batch.

Moreover, the argument that contemporary or 'modern' society is inauthentic due to the modernisation of methods of (re)production can be questioned on the basis that (1) it effectively renders authentic *progress* impossible, meaning that the concept could only usefully be applied in contexts where historical accuracy is of importance; and (2) doesn't take into account the individual's actual process of perceiving and deriving value from consuming authenticity. Object authenticity is arguably the strictest, most narrow definition, which renders true authentic consumption experiences rare and outside the

reach of many consumers. This can be further linked to the importance of *cultural capital* in the consumption of authenticity, which is further discussion in section 3.

2.4.2 *Sincere Object Authenticity*

Sincere object authenticity is a term coined for the purposes of this thesis. It essentially draws on Cornet (1975) and Rose & Wood (2005), who highlight a different aspect of object authenticity – namely that for something to be object authentic, it has to be made for the *right purpose*. For example, a cultural object made using traditional methods and materials, by a producer with the necessary cultural background to legitimately produce an authentic object, may be ruled inauthentic if made for the purpose of selling to a tourist rather than traditional use (Cornet, 1975). Sincerity is usually treated as a direct interpersonal aspect of human relations, however the importance of sincerity in object authenticity brings it closer to constructed authenticity as it acknowledges the process of negotiation between producer and user or owner (Taylor, 2001).

The concept of sincerity has occasionally been discussed – though often implicitly – in business studies focused on authenticity. For instance, in their study on the role of authenticity in the consumption of fine wines, the importance of ‘object sincerity’ is present for a wine producer who states that they “do not make wine for the consumer. I make a wine that best expresses the vineyard and vintage” (Beverland, Lindgreen, & Vink, 2008: 10). This quote shows that they are concerned with perfecting their craft not solely for the purposes of maximising commercial gain (low sincere authenticity), but see it as a representation of themselves and their vineyard. Similarly, a consumer interviewed in the same research study noted the importance of producers openly recognising the varying levels of quality of their produce, which in their view gives the producer more credibility – again highlighting the importance of sincerity and honesty. Beverland et al. (2008: 253, 254) place these statements under the categories of “stylistic consistency” and “quality commitments,” respectively. However, both can equally be seen as statements supporting the importance of an underlying sincerity, in producing a product that is an honest representation of the producer’s commitment to producing an object-authentic, high-quality wine.

A further example can be found in Beverland (2006), in which the author investigates consumers’ evaluation of beer advertisers’ authenticity claims. His findings are divided into three forms of authenticity, labelled *pure*, *approximate*, and *moral* authenticity (Beverland, 2006: 8). These terms are unique to the study in question, and not commonly

nor indeed elsewhere used in studies of authenticity. Interestingly, Beverland's definition of moral authenticity presents arguments very similar to those put forward by Cornet (1975) in his discussion of sincere object authenticity. In analysing the answers provided by three of their respondents, the author notes that they:

“[...] place the emphasis squarely on the motive, means, and ends (production of a high-quality product) of the creative act, focusing on the importance of producers being engaged with the production and motivated by a love of the task. In addition, they emphasize the essential human component of the process rather than just history per se [...] authenticity comes from the sense that a passionate creator is involved in making products, and is motivated primarily by their love for the craft.” (Beverland, 2006: 11-12)

This passage shows that consumers in some instances will use their perception of a producer's sincerity – that is, the extent to which their actual passion for the craft measures up to that stated in their marketing materials, their own expectations, etc. – to judge the object authenticity of the product. In essence, sincere object authenticity is derived by these consumers through the perceived purity of the producers' motivations. This highlights the importance, at least from a consumer perspective, of acknowledging not only aspects of authenticity related to strict object authenticity (originality, uniqueness, objectively verifiable by experts); but also perceptions of underlying motivations.

Table 2.1-1 summarises the fundamental differences between the aspects forms of object authenticity. It will be developed throughout the literature review to highlight the key points of difference and similarity between the main conceptualisations of authenticity. As can be seen from this first iteration, a key difference between 'strict' and sincere object authenticity is found in the *negotiated* aspect of sincere authenticity, which essentially means that sincere authenticity is not as strictly ontologically objective – that is, there is an element of interpersonal interpretation involved in the process of determining sincere object authenticity, where strict object authenticity is solely reliant on an objective external reality and one's concrete ability to appreciate this.

Table 2.1-1 –Forms of Object Authenticity

Authenticity Type	Strict	Sincere
Focal Point	Toured Object	Toured Object
Key Determining Factor(s)	Originality, Uniqueness, Method of Production, 'Organicness', Unadulterated	Honesty, Motivations
Emergent		
Personal and Pluralistic		
Negotiated		✓
Social		

2.5 Constructed Authenticity

Constructed authenticity states that multiple meanings can be constructed depending on the perspective of the consumer (Wang, 1999). Rather than being concerned with whether something is objectively authentic or not, constructed authenticity is concerned with which traits “for a given individual ... make a cultural product acceptable as ‘authentic’” (Cohen, 1988: 378). As such, a product deemed as inauthentic by one person, at a particular time and for a particular purpose, may be seen as authentic at the same *time* by a person with a different perspective, or indeed by the same *person* at another time (ibid).

Constructed authenticity draws on the application of individual expectations, stereotypes, and fantasies onto the experience or object being consumed (Bruner, 1994). Considerable importance is placed on the perception of the individual, their use of knowledge and the process of negotiation involved in the social construction of authenticity (Wang, 1999). To derive authenticity from mass-cultural, commoditised offering, requires the application of particular knowledge and idiosyncratic consumption practices (Holt, 1998), and as such the authenticity of the offering becomes intrinsically linked with the situational perception of the individual. In contrast, offerings of legitimate object authenticity do not in every instance necessitate the use of consumer-specific knowledge to extract authenticity benefits, as its authenticity has already been determined by the scientific authentication of experts in that field (Trilling, 1972).

Early proponents of constructed authenticity, Bruner (1994) and Cohen (1988) also argue that authenticity is not necessarily endowed at the time of production. Even a product deemed as inauthentic at its conception may gradually grow to be seen as authentic with time, even by experts. In his study, Bruner (1994: 402) argues that “what was considered authentic in the sense of credible [strict object authenticity] in one historical era has changed in the course of 60 years. Standards change, and what any era considers authentic moves in and out of consciousness.”

Table 2.1-2 – Basic Parameters of Constructed Authenticity

Authenticity Type	Strict Object Authenticity	Sincere Object Authenticity	Constructed Authenticity
Focal Point	Toured Object	Toured Object	Toured Object
Key Determining Factor(s)	Originality, Uniqueness, Method of Production, 'Organicness', Unadulterated	Honesty, Motivations	Projection, Expectations, Emergence, Personal Interpretation and Definition
Emergent			✓
Personal and Pluralistic			✓
Negotiated		✓	✓
Social			✓

Table 2.1-2 builds on table 2.1-1 by highlighting how constructed authenticity differs from both strict and sincere object authenticity. As can be seen from the table, and discussed above, the core ontological difference here is such that constructed authenticity relies in every aspect on the projection, expectation, and personal interpretations of the consumer. This means that constructed authenticity is *emergent* in the sense that a consumption experience may not be perceived as authentic at one time, but could *grow* to be perceived as authentic at a later date. Constructed authenticity is also *social* in the sense that it can rely on interactions with others, and personal/pluralistic in the sense that it is internal to the consumer, and something may be perceived as authentic by several consumers for different, personal reasons.

2.6 Existential Authenticity

The notion of existential authenticity as proposed by Wang (1999: 358) draws on Heidegger's ontological notion that "to ask about the meaning of Being is to look for the meaning of authenticity." Taking a decisive step away from object and constructed authenticity, Wang (1999: 359) thus posits that existential authenticity "can often have nothing to do with whether toured objects are real." Instead, it addresses the relationships, feelings, sensations – the sense of self – derived from the performance of consumption (Rickly-Boyd, 2012); it is "something which people can *do* and a feeling which is *experienced*" (Knudsen & Waade, 2010: 1, emphasis in original). For Wang (1999), activities and toured objects can be utilised in the quest for existential authenticity, but whether or not they are in themselves authentic is essentially irrelevant.

Existential authenticity is an activity-based state of being; an internal state that focuses on the feelings of being true to oneself (Wang, 1999). It is achieved by altering the balance between Logos and Eros (Wang, 1999); which (Wang, 1996; 1999) equates to

Sigmund Freud's "reality-" and "pleasure principle," respectively. Wang (1996) argues that authenticity is lost as modern society forces us to be more rational (Logos) and less spontaneous and emotional (Eros). To counteract this, people seek out more hedonic (Eros) experiences within "liminal zones," at a distance from the constraints of modern society (Wang, 1999).

Steiner & Reisinger (2006) draw on Heidegger to gain a deeper theoretical understanding of the implications of Wang's (1999) existential authenticity. In doing so they argue that "the existential self is transient, not enduring, and not conforming to a type. It changes from moment to moment ... One can only momentarily be authentic in different situations" (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006: 303). Building on this line of argument the authors implicitly link the notion of existential authenticity to a fundamental principal of constructed authenticity. Proponents of constructed authenticity argue that the transient perceptions of the consumer affects whether an offering is deemed authentic (Cohen, 1988); similarly, Steiner & Reisinger (2006: 306) argue that "When people project different identities or senses of self, they bring to light different possibilities which grant different experiences," which arguably affects whether or not what they consume is perceived as existentially authentic. Thus, existential authenticity is to some extent constructed by the consumer, relying on their perceptions and interpretations of the offering at hand.

Acknowledging this link between the approaches used by existential and constructed authenticity raises the question of whether the *perceived* authenticity of 'toured objects' might have a greater impact on existential authenticity than hypothesised by Wang (1999). Indeed, more recent research has found a link between perceptions of object/constructed and existential authenticity (cf. Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Leigh et al., 2006) which suggests that the concepts should be viewed as interlinked rather than conflicting (Belhassen et al., 2008; Mkono, 2012). This argument is advanced in sections 2.7 and 2.13.

Table 2.1-3 –Basic Parameters of Existential Authenticity

Authenticity Type	Strict Object Authenticity	Sincere Object Authenticity	Constructed Authenticity	Existential Authenticity
Focal Point	Toured Object	Toured Object	Toured Object	Activity, the Authentic Self
Key Determining Factor(s)	Originality, Uniqueness, Method of Production, 'Organicness', Unadulterated	Honesty, Motivations	Projection, Expectations, Emergence, Personal Interpretation and Definition	Consumer's internal feeling(s) of being true to themselves, or authentic
Emergent			✓	
Personal and Pluralistic			✓	✓
Negotiated		✓	✓	
Social			✓	✓

Building further on table 2.1-1, the above table 2.1-3 shows how existential authenticity relates to object and constructed authenticity. A key point of difference is in the focal point, insofar as existential authenticity focuses not on a toured object, but an activity and the authentic *self* as experienced by the consumer. This means that it is entirely personal and social, and authenticity cannot be emergent or negotiated in the sense of ‘perceiving’ authenticity in an object over time – rather, one may *feel* more or less authentic in the act, and as a result, of consumption.

2.7 Interrelationships between Concepts

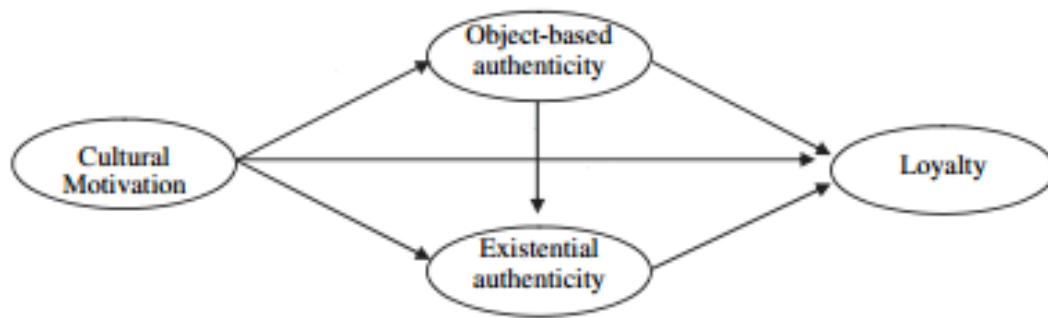
The contested nature of authenticity has led some authors to suggest that aspects of the concept should be abandoned. Most notably, Reisinger & Steiner (2006: 66) argued that object authenticity as a concept should be abandoned due to its “numerous, contradictory, and irreconcilable” definitions and perspectives. The authors cite the varying fundamental approaches to the concept by modernists, who use object authenticity in the sense of an objective, fixed and knowable reality and originality (i.e. an objectively original and sincere artwork holds authentic value); constructivists, who place less emphasis on originality, and instead see authenticity as symbolic and negotiated; and postmodernists, who posit that authenticity is altogether irrelevant as consumers do not care for or are suspicious of authenticity. The authors also criticise prevailing notions of object authenticity on the grounds that it limits consumer enjoyment as it implies a disconfirmation paradigm, whereby the consumer judges an experience based on its (in)ability to live up to preconceived notions of what the experience ought to be.

However, abandoning object authenticity altogether in favour of existential authenticity as proposed by Reisinger & Steiner (2006) and Steiner & Reisinger (2006) fails to

recognise that it still holds value if defined and applied correctly (Belhassen & Caton, 2006; Belhassen et al., 2008; Lau, 2010; Mkono, 2012). There is also a need to acknowledge the interlinked nature of the various conceptualisations. In terms of the interaction between object and existential authenticity, Leigh et al. (2006) and Kolar & Zabkar (2010) found that object authenticity aids perceptions of existential authenticity. With regards to the relationship between constructed and existential authenticity, in the context of tourism, Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher (2010) note that existential authenticity hinges on whether objects encountered are deemed authentic by the individual and this authenticity is negotiated in the process of consumption. While this latter study arguably relies more on *constructed* than object authenticity, it nonetheless highlights the potential role of object-authenticity in facilitating existential, bringing it somewhat in line with Leigh et al. (2006) and Kolar & Zabkar (2010). Indeed, abandoning the concept of object authenticity altogether, as suggested by Risinger & Steiner (2006), leads to a rather problematic position whereby authenticity is only ever reliant on subjective experience, and the cause of this emotional state (Wang, 1999) becomes irrelevant. Baudrillard (1994 [1981]) and Eco (1986) would suggest that this is precisely the logic that leads to endless circles of manufactured hyperreality, as a replica of Venice inside a Las Vegas hotel would implicitly be as authentic as the original city. While both may lead consumers to experience existential authenticity, consideration of object authenticity necessarily forces one to consider the grounds on which the experiences are formed. This in turn highlights the limitations of either conceptualisation of authenticity if considered in a vacuum; Object authenticity only allows for very specific, historically grounded offerings ‘approved’ by experts to be truly authentic, rendering large swathes of contemporary society void of meaning; Existential authenticity leads *anything* to be authentic, and no source of authenticity can be differentiated in context from any other. A more nuanced, multi-faceted conceptualisation is thus needed better to understand authenticity from a consumption perspective.

Following this logic, Kolar & Zabkar (2010: 655) “adopt the consumer-based perspective which fosters a more affirmative, nuanced, realistic and multi-conceptual investigation of tourist perceptions of behaviours.” The same stance is taken for this thesis, however rather than relying on the model proposed by (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) (figure 2.1), a new conceptualisation is offered. While Kolar and Zabkar prove their framework to be sound, it focuses on *loyalty* as an outcome of authenticity consumption and don’t account for constructed authenticity.

Figure 2.1 – Kolar and Zabkar’s (2010) Proposed Model of Authenticity



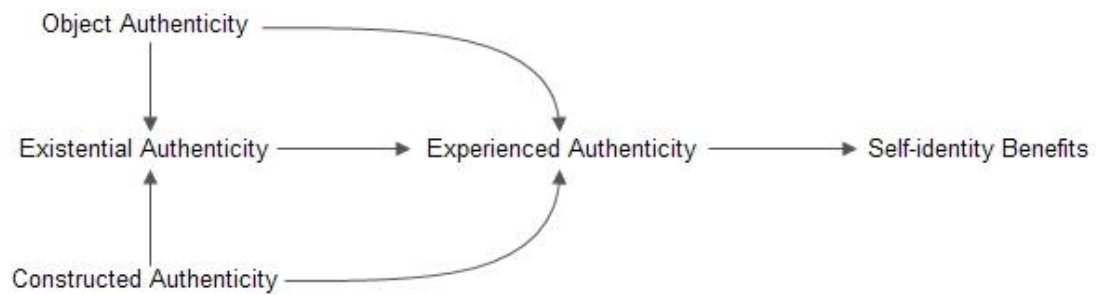
Source: Kolar & Zabkar (2010: 656)

For the purposes of this thesis, the conceptualisations of authenticity as object, constructed and existential are thus seen as interlinked *sources* of authenticity. Each conceptualisation offers a route to personally meaningful consumption; that is, through the perceived authenticity of the consumed offering, whether object, constructed, existential, or a combination thereof, consumers are able to derive identity benefits. The interaction between these forms of authenticity is represented in figure 2.2, where experienced authenticity is introduced as a means of representing the sum of authenticity benefits extracted by the consumer.

The relationships proposed in figure 2.2 propositions the term *experienced authenticity* as a means of representing the sum of authenticity benefits derived from consumption, whether through object-, constructed-, existential-authentic sources, or a combination thereof. Moreover, it takes into account findings that suggest that object (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) and constructed (Buchmann et al., 2010) authenticity can positively affect perceptions of existential authenticity. It should be noted that no research was found that explored whether existential authenticity affects constructed authenticity. As constructed authenticity relies on the perspective of the consumer (Cohen, 1988), and existential authenticity affects one’s sense of self (Wang, 1999), this raises the question of whether an induced state of existential authenticity might affect the consumer’s propensity towards accepting toured objects as authentic. As no empirical evidence to support this argument was found in the literature it has been left out of the figure, however it highlights an area worthy of further investigation and will be explored in this thesis.

The link between consumption of authenticity and self-identity benefits is widely accepted (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006), and discussed in further detail in sections 2.10 and 1.2.1.

Figure 2.2 – Structure of Interrelationships Between Conceptualisations of Authenticity



2.8 Section Conclusion

This section has critically examined the three main conceptualisation of authenticity in consumer research: object, constructed, and existential (Wang, 1999). In doing so it has highlighted limitations and gaps in understanding in order to support the position that there is a need for an holistic approach to research into the conceptualisation of authenticity that accounts for their interrelationships (cf. Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Wang, 2007), resulting in the framework presented in figure 2.2.

Additionally, the often neglected *sincere* aspect of object authenticity (Cornet, 1975) was introduced and highlighted as an area in need of further consideration. By bringing this intrapersonal aspect of object authenticity to the fore, the concept is brought closer to constructed authenticity, highlighting that even object-based authenticity might to some extent and in some instances rely on partially constructed meaning. Similarly, existential authenticity was argued to in some instances rely on the perspective of the consumer (Buchmann et al., 2010) – the core position of constructed authenticity (Cohen, 1988) – though with a focus on the authentic self as opposed to the authenticity of the offering. Having found evidence for a positive relationship between object (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) and constructed (Leigh et al., 2006) and existential authenticity, figure 2.2 is put forward as a visual representation of the interrelationship between these conceptualisations.

The concluding stance of this section is that value can still be derived from focusing on each of these concepts in relative isolation: examples of this can be found, for instance,

in Castéran & Roederer (2013), who positively link perceptions of object authenticity to frequency of visit; or Kovács, Carroll, & Lehman (2014) and Ramkissoon & Uysal (2011), who link constructed authenticity to perceived value and intentions to consume specific attractions, respectively. However, to answer calls for deeper understanding of “the benefits that consumer experience when they consume or experience something authentic” (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014: 1096), it is argued that a multi-conceptual approach is needed to provide a more nuanced and realistic understanding (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010).

Section Two: Authenticity Consumption

2.9 Section Introduction

Early studies of authenticity consumption are found within sociology and tourism, which provide the foundation for authenticity within marketing. Authenticity consumption research mainly engaged in one of two discourses (Redfoot, 1984; Uriely, 2005). One discourse views the tourist as a consumer on a quest for authenticity (Cohen, 1988; MacCannell, 1973, 1976). The second discourse adopts a social critical stance to view the consumer [tourist] as a product of modern, capitalist societies' cultural decadence, disinterested in the authentic and with a preference for spectacle (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]).

This section draws on the former of these two discourses to examine authenticity consumption, and examines studies that focus on the 'quest' for authenticity (MacCannell, 1976) – that is, the personal meanings derived from its consumption, such as self-identity benefits (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010) and social acceptance (Kim & Jamal, 2007) through *communitas* built around the consumption of a shared sense of authenticity (Leigh et al., 2006).

2.10 Authenticity Consumption: Quest, Self-identity and Personal Meaning

The importance of authenticity in consumption practices is underpinned by the notion that consumption is linked to conceptualisations of the self-concept (Belk, 1988; Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy, Grewal, & Mangleburg, 2000). One's self-concept is the sum of the beliefs one holds about oneself, whether positive or negative. Intrapersonally this can be further divided into the ideal and actual self: the former refers to the desired self we aspire to be, while the latter is a more realistic reflection of who we are (Dolich 1969; Schenk and Holman 1980; Sirgy et al. 2000). Interpersonally one's self-concept also takes into account how we think others perceive us, often referred to as one's looking-glass self (Munson and Spivey 1980; Arnould, Price et al. 2004). It has long been acknowledged that consumers select products (Tucker 1967), brands (Schenk and Holman 1980) and services (Sirgy 1982) that conform to either their ideal, actual, looking-glass, or situational self-image, or a combination thereof (Schenk and Holman 1980; Sirgy 1982; Belk 1988; Sirgy et al. 2000). In other words, consumers choose offerings that offer a satisfactory level of self-image congruence (Sirgy et al. 2000; Kressmann, Sirgy et al. 2006), which is interchangeably referred to as "self-congruity," "self-congruence," and "image congruence" in the literature (Kressmann et al. 2006).

Arnould and Price (2003 [2000]) argue that consumers increasingly and actively appropriate authenticity due to postmodern market characteristics (i.e. globalisation, hyperreality); similarly, Thompson et al. (2006) ascribe the demand for authenticity to an increasingly homogenised and standardised marketplace. Beverland and Farrelly (2010) build on this and put forward the argument that consumers seek authentic consumption experiences as a key component of building their self-concept; that authenticity becomes increasingly important as consumers purposefully link an “object or experience to stories of the self” (2010: 839). Using in-depth interviews with 21 informants, Beverland and Farrelly (2010) found that consumers related perceived authenticity with positive self-concept (identity) benefits, and that they actively co-created authenticity in the consumption experience based on their self-concept goals. Similarly, Grant (2000) argues that consumers, regardless of economic status, are increasingly concerned with self-actualisation, and places authentic experiences at the centre of this process. Further emphasising the importance of co-creation Thyne & Hede (2016) present the link between co-creation of value and authenticity as a future avenue of research under the ‘service dominant logic’ paradigm.

As such consumers are often said to be on a “quest” for authenticity (Thompson et al., 2006). This quest has resulted in consumers becoming increasingly concerned with the concept of authenticity as globalisation, homogenisation and ‘hyperreality’ have drained contemporary (postmodern) society of traditional sources of self-identity and meaning (Arnould & Price, 2000; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Thompson et al., 2006). This ‘quest’ is, as this line of argument suggests, heavily rooted in an object-authentic logic; it is triggered by the inauthenticity caused by ‘modern’ or ‘post-modern’ society. However, there is an acknowledged need for additional research into “the benefits that consumer experience when they consume or experience something authentic” (Napoli et al., 2014: 1096), and how they perceive authenticity (Grayson and Martinec 2004; Rose and Wood 2005). Acknowledging, as these authors do, that there is a need to better understand *how* consumers experience authenticity, also opens up for a new understanding of what triggers this ‘quest’. Indeed, a simple argument could be posited that it may not be due to perceptions of *inauthenticity* – one could equally frame the quest in simple Maslowvian logic. That is, contemporary society in developed countries provides the means to meet basic needs (i.e. physiological through to esteem) with greater ease than in the past, thus creating within members of said societies a higher demand for self-actualisation. The

fundamental link between consumption and identity thus remains important, but is brought closer to *existential*-authentic logic than the somewhat more pessimistic object-based argument above.

The notion of the quest is commonly used in studies that examine consumers' search for and use of authenticity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003) particularly in tourism contexts (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010): Crang (1996) explores constructed authenticity in *Magic kingdom or a quest for quixotic authenticity?*; Kim & Jamal (2007) examine the *Touristic quest for existential authenticity*; and Leigh et al. (2006) consider multiple forms of authenticity in *The consumer quest for authenticity: the multiplicity of meanings within the MG subculture of consumption*.

MacCannell (1976) is often credited as the first author to place the 'quest for authenticity' at the centre of contemporary culture. For MacCannell (1973; 1976) contemporary western societies are inherently inauthentic due to the industrialised commoditisation of society and culture, and as such he argued that consumers sought authenticity through touristic experiences. Hence, the authenticity quest is a response to the inauthenticity associated with the commoditisation of modern western societies – a position that relies on a strict object definition of authenticity (section 2.4). This section critically examines how research in this context draws on the three conceptualisation of authenticity.

2.10.1 Consuming Object Authenticity

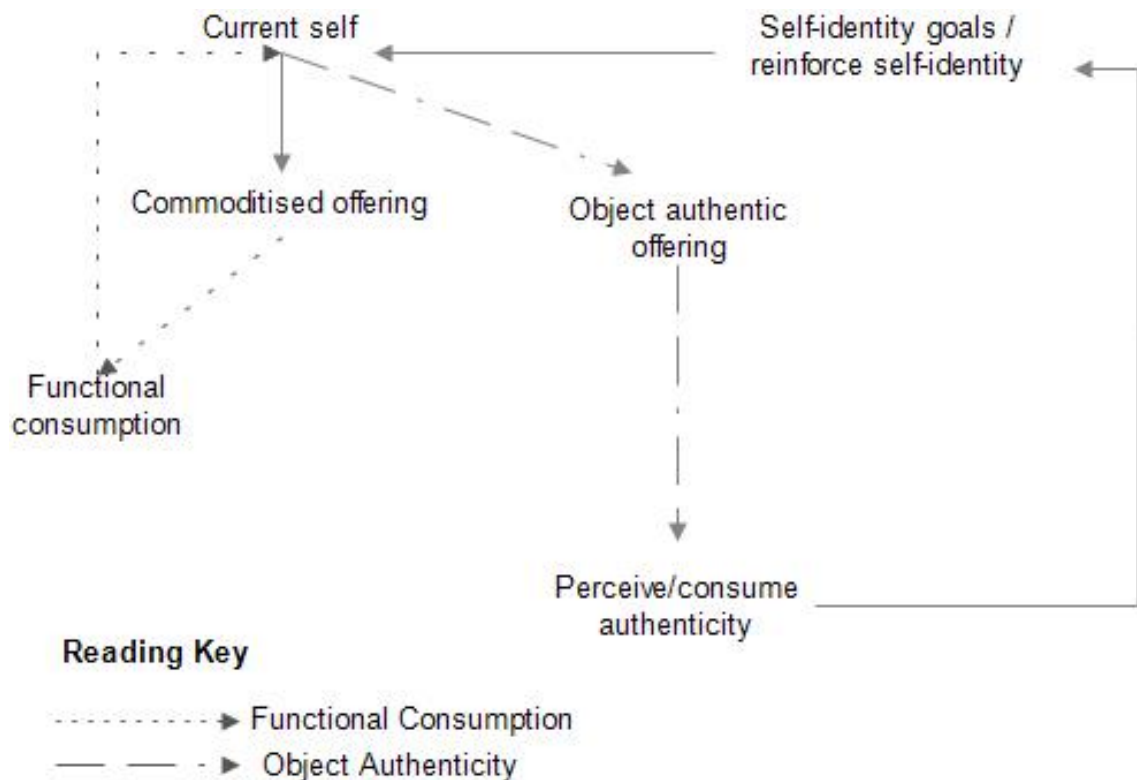
Strict object authenticity – which, as noted previously, is the form most widely considered in studies of object authenticity – is consumed after a process of determining the *inauthentic* found within contemporary mainstream society (Taylor, 2001). For example, as the 'service revolution' unfolded and experiences began homogenising through the proliferation of chain stores, food outlets etc. Hence, corporate machines replicate not only *objects* but also *experiences*, leading several sociologists to criticise the inauthentic and unoriginal experiences of contemporary life (cf. Baudrillard, 1994 [1981]; Boorstin, 1992 [1961]; Eco, 1986).

Object authenticity consumption is defined by perceptions of what it is not. For instance, the concept of object authenticity has been used draw a distinction between niche- and mass-tourism, implying the inauthenticity of the latter as contrasted to the former (Sharpley, 1994). This theoretical stance, whereby authenticity is viewed in terms of the

'organic,' of the natural, the original, was taken by social scientists virtually verbatim and applied in the context of consumers', commonly tourists', experiences (Wang, 1999); in terms of tourist-experiential aspects such as language, festivals, art, cuisine, dress, architecture, or, in short, culture (Cohen, 1988; Sharpley, 1994).

These tourism studies commonly draw on MacCannell's (1973; 1976) *strict* object view of authenticity, which led him to the rather pessimistic conclusion that, due to cultural commodification resulting in staged authenticity, the quest is ultimately futile. In taking this stance MacCannell (1973; 1976) implicitly draws a link between the authentic *experience* and object authentic ontology, which fails to take into account effects resulting from feelings, fantasy and doing in the act of consuming (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) – that is, it doesn't take into consideration the underlying logic of *sincere* nor *existential* authenticity. With object authenticity being determined by experts (Trilling, 1972) and not by the consumer, it provides a direct route to the consumption of authenticity. The path from offering, to consumption of its authenticity, to self-identity goals (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010), is represented in figure 2.3-1.

Figure 2.3-1 – Consumption of Object Authenticity



This view of object authenticity is in essence concerned with judgements as to whether something *is* or *is not* authentic (Wang, 1999). It is critical of the influence of modernity² in terms of industrialised homogenisation and commoditisation (cf. Appadurai, 2010 [1986]) and its focus on the effects of commoditisation and homogenisation makes object authenticity an inherently modern concept² (Berger, 1973; Cohen, 1988; Trilling, 1972). For physical objects and experiences/performances alike, this is determined by the originality of the offering and its method of product (Wang, 1999), as judged by experts with the required authority to make said judgment (Trilling, 1972), as opposed to the perceptions of the consumer.

Despite the challenges posed to object authenticity by proponents of constructed and existential conceptualisations (Wang, 1999; Rode & Wood, 2005; Resinger & Steiner, 2006), the object authentic view of authenticity in consumption remains in use, whether wittingly or not. An example of this can be found in Munoz, Wood & Solomon (2006) and their study of the authenticity of Irish pubs in which they focus on consumers' ability to distinguish between that which is real, and what is 'simulacra', and rely on an electronic survey featuring photographs of 'real' Irish pubs from Ireland which are juxtaposed with images of reproduction faux-Irish pubs in Australia and the United States. Respondents were also asked to define authenticity both generally and in the context of Irish pubs. The authors acknowledge that in-situ experiential data would have been preferable, however this minimizes the issue: judging the constructed and existential authentic aspects of an experience through limited photographic imagery fails to capture the complexities of consumption experiences. In addition, this approach succumbs to the object-authentic logic of an objectively authentic ideal, and implies the object-oriented postmodernist view that consumers might be wilfully deceived into believing that a faux-Irish pub might be authentic.

Arguably the most fundamental critique of object authenticity of modern consumption practices is that it has its roots in tourism studies, and touristic research starts with the *assumption* that the motivation for travel is the perceived inauthenticity of one's own society (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]; Cohen, 1988; MacCannell, 1973, 1976); indeed, Cohen (1988) noted that research on what is considered authentic within one's own culture is scarce. Thus, by focusing solely on object based authenticity, one fails to take into account

² The use of the terms 'modernity' and 'modern' in this context reflects those of the authors cited; as a form of antithesis of a pre-industrialised society not yet dis-authenticated by the influences of mass-(re)production and mass-culture.

consumers' experiences and symbolic meanings derived in the process of consumption (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Clarke, Kell, Schmidt, & Vignali, 1998).

Object authenticity has since been complemented (Belhassen et al., 2008) or, depending on your standpoint, replaced (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006), by the less pessimistic constructed (Cohen, 1988) and existential (Wang, 1999) schools of authenticity thought, discussed in the following sections.

2.10.2 Consuming Constructed authenticity

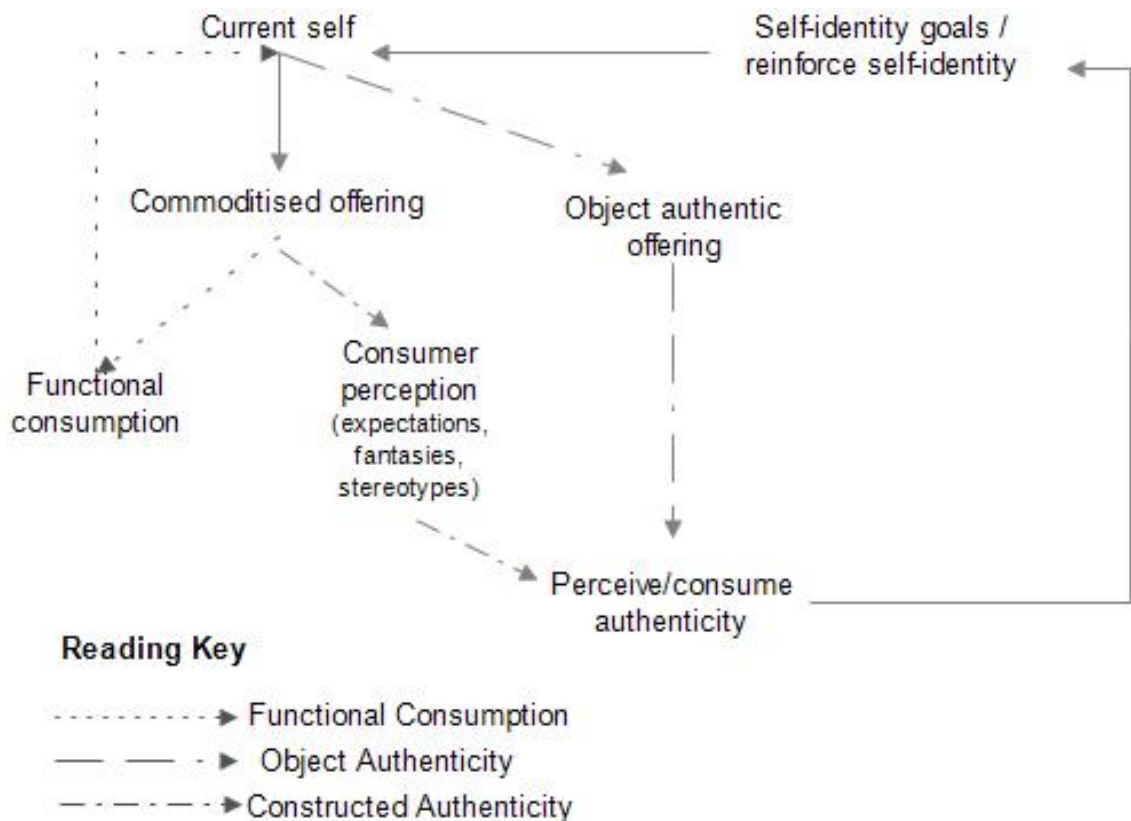
Using strict object authenticity to inform research into cultural experiences becomes problematic as it “presupposes universal standards” (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010: 853). Taking a contrary view to this, constructed authenticity relies instead on the perceptions of the consumer at the time of consumption (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988). That is to say, the consumers' individual point of view (expectations, stereotypes, fantasies) determines whether or not something is authentic as perceived by them, as opposed to the rulings of experts. Beverland & Farrelly (2010) link this to identity goals, arguing that consumers seek out authenticity clues that relate positively to their identity formation, while ignoring cues that are inconsistent with their motivations for consumption.

Leigh et al. (2006) found constructed – along with strict object and existential – authenticity to be an important factor within the subculture of MG car owners. Alongside the importance of their restored MG cars being objectively authentic, and the experience leading to a feeling of being existentially authentic, respondents noted the importance of their individual perceptions of the vehicle (ibid). This often took the form of having a particular understanding of the car that may not be available to others (ibid), which to some extent can also help in ‘overcoming’ minor object inauthenticities (i.e. not having what they aptly refer to as a “museum car”).

Lego, Wood, McFee, & Solomon (2002), in their study on the consumption of authenticity in Irish pubs (in America), also find authenticity to hinge on perception as opposed to an objective ideal. This was found to be true of both owners and patrons. Owners were found commonly to rely on “personal reference; those elements the individual personally believed reflected an authentic Irish pub” (Lego et al., 2002: 70) in their design of an establishment. Similarly, patrons sought for cues that reflected their individual perceptions of what constitutes an Irish pub. Lego et al. (2002) also note that, with authenticity relying on individual perceptions, the act of consuming authenticity relies on the knowledge level of the consumer; so that consumers with a higher degree of

contextual knowledge might be more discerning. This links to the role of cultural capital (and its related idiosyncratic consumption practices) in the process of consuming authenticity, which is discussed further in section three. Figure 2.3-2 shows how the process of consuming constructed authenticity relates to that of object authenticity, with the constructed path to authenticity drawing on the consumer's idiosyncratic perceptions.

Figure 2.3-2 – Consumption of Constructed Authenticity



Constructed authenticity has also been found to facilitate existential authenticity. In Leigh et al.'s (2006) study, the act of being able to perceive authenticity through having idiosyncratic knowledge facilitated individuals to feel authentic in their interactions with their cars. Moreover, being able to relay these experiences to other was linked to the intrapersonal aspect of existential authenticity. Similarly, in a study on the existential authenticity of lifestyle rock climbers, Rickly-Boyd (2012) captures the importance role of being able to construct authenticity where others might not; for instance by living in your car, forsaking conveniences, and buying into the lifestyle. Factors such as these are commonly related in the study as fuelling a sense of interpersonal existential authenticity, while the community surrounding the activity related to intrapersonal aspects of the concept.

2.10.3 Consuming Existential Authenticity

Noting that object and constructed authenticity was of limited applicability in the study of hedonistic experiences (i.e. hobbies, visiting theme parks) – but still useful in contexts of consuming the past, culture, history, and ethnicity – Wang (1999) states that researchers have three options: ignore the difficulties that arise; abandon authenticity altogether for these contexts; or redefine it. Opting for the latter, Wang (1999) draws a distinction between the authenticity of toured objects – the focal point of object and constructive authenticity – and of *experiences*. The former was detailed above, the latter places focus internally within the tourist and in social interactions: it focuses on the (inter)subjective feeling of oneself being more authentic in the consumption of a particular experience.

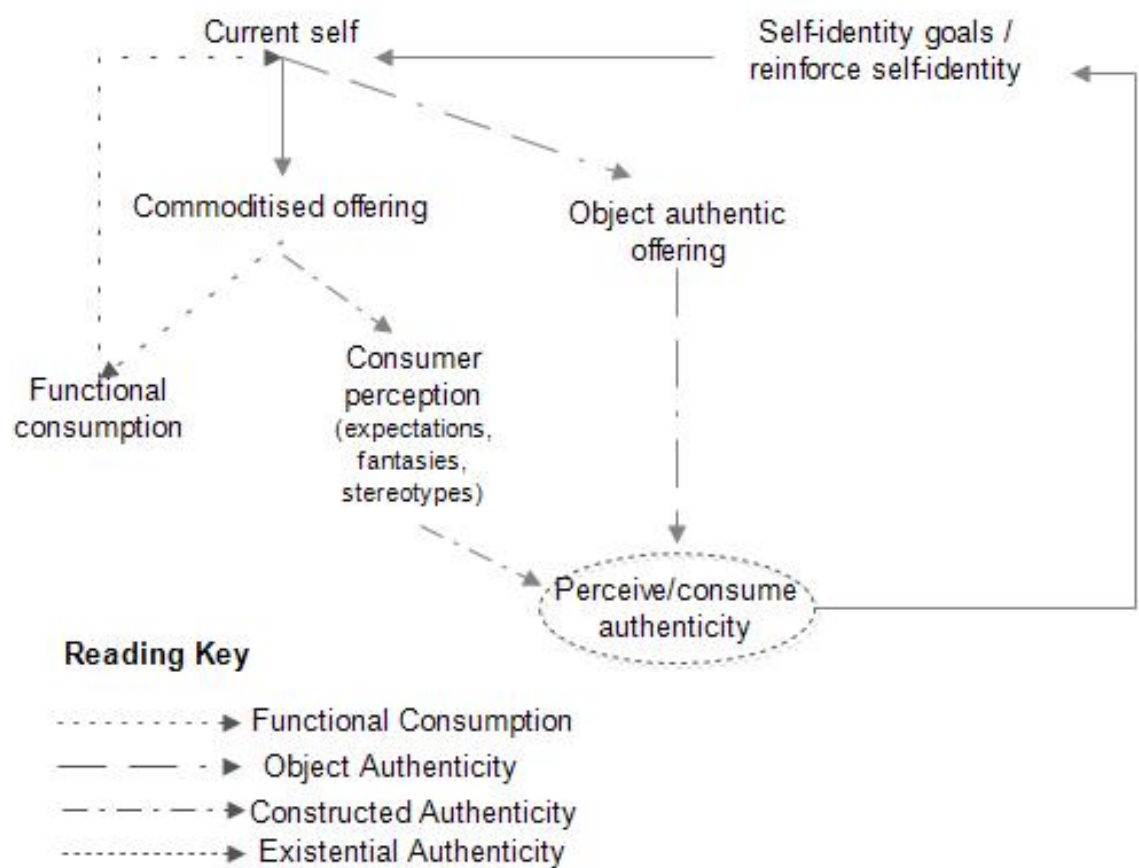
This focus on the importance of existential aspects of consumption is found within the work of Holbrook & Hirschman (1982), in which they argued the importance of taking into consideration hedonic aspects of consumption within marketing thought. Building on the seminal insights of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), influential marketing commentators have argued that the focus of developed economies has shifted from commodities, to goods, to services, to experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999; Schmitt, 1999), making Wang's (1999) focus on the existentially authentic experience particularly salient.

While a wide range of studies have discussed what existential authenticity constitutes on a theoretical level (cf. Steiner & Reisinger, 2006), relatively fewer empirical studies on the benefits experienced by consumers and their process of consumption in the context of existential authenticity have been carried out. Notable exceptions include the aforementioned studies by Rickly-Boyd (2012) and Leigh et al. (2006), both of which found authenticity to be performative and linked to the feelings of an authentic self, both inter- and intra-subjectively, that arise from the act of consuming a particular product or experience.

In section 2.10.2 it was argued that existential authenticity can arise from the act of perceiving constructed authenticity – and it has also been linked to the consumption of object authenticity (cf. Buchmann et al., 2010; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) – however it can also be unrelated to the authenticity, perceived or otherwise, of any particular offering (Wang, 1999). In these instances, existential authenticity arises from a personal, holistic appreciation of the experience itself and how this relates to one's self. In this vein, Rickly-

Boyd's (2012) respondents reported the experience making them 'feel complete' and entering a state of flow which facilitated inter-subjective authenticity; and feelings of community with fellow climbers, which facilitates intra-personal authenticity. This raises the question of whether feelings of existential authenticity – which is not a constant state, but fleeting moments (Rickly-Boyd, 2012) – affects consumers perceptions of constructed authenticity, their willingness to accept something as authentic, and their process of consuming authenticity at large. This is one question explored in this thesis, and figure 2.3-3 shows how existential authenticity relates to both object and constructed authenticity. It also represents the possibility of existential authenticity existing independently of the other two conceptualisations at the time of consumption.

Figure 2.3-3 – Consumption of Existential Authenticity



2.11 Section Conclusion

This section has provided an overview of how the three main conceptualisations of authenticity – object, constructed, and existential – relate to the context of consumption. These three conceptualisations of authenticity have been shown to be interrelated – both object (cf. Buchmann et al., 2010; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) and constructed (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012) authenticity have been shown to have an effect on

existential authenticity in the process of consumption, and it is argued that all three relate to identity goals (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Figure 2.3-3 depicts their individual paths as well as confirmed relationships during the process of consumption. Through this discussion it has also been argued that object authenticity should be viewed not as an ideal to aspire to, but as one of several means of providing authenticity in consumption (cf. Belhassen et al., 2008).

However, while constructed and existential views of authenticity technically allow for the exploration of commoditised experiences and products as potential sources of authenticity (cf. Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Leigh et al., 2006; Rose & Wood, 2005), the idea that contemporary society has been robbed of sources of authenticity due to industrialised homogenisation and commoditisation (cf. Appadurai, 2010 [1986]; Arnould & Price, 2000; Zukin, 2010) is rarely contested. This can be attributed to the continuing influence of object-authentic logic even in studies that acknowledge other forms of authenticity, insofar as they focus on consumption practices outside the day-to-day (see section 2.16).

An overview of studies that have explored how consumers derive authenticity from commoditised products and experience is presented in the appendix (Table 7.1).. In the main these studies focus on deriving authenticity from experiences beyond the daily norm: focusing either on touristic experiences (Kim & Jamal, 2007); specific subcultural consumption (Leigh et al., 2006); or a blend of the two (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). The source of authenticity has transitioned from being purely object-derived to either purely existential (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2012) or the interaction between experience and object (Leigh et al., 2006). However, the underpinning assumption is that wider contemporary culture has been drained of authentic sources of self-identity and meaning (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). This is problematic as it fails to account for the subjective and idiosyncratic aspects of consumption. Indeed, even within museums – where the ideal of object authenticity originated (see section 2.4) – there is not recognition of the fact that visitors experience authenticity through a more complex process of consumption, not merely the object on display (Thyne & Hede, 2016). As such there is a need for research that breaks with the object-authentic notion of the ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ as being inherently associated with the object, and investigates the benefits derived through *perceiving and constructing* authenticity through a wider range of consumption experiences (cf. Napoli et al., 2014).

Section Three: Authenticity and Cultural Capital

2.12 Section Introduction

Holt (1998) and Arsel and Thompson (2011) apply Bourdieu's (1984) fields of consumption and cultural capital to explore consumer's consumption of authenticity. Taking this approach, where consumers are seen as amassing and leveraging field of consumption-specific cultural capital (knowledge, skills, tastes) to extract authenticity from their consumption, allows for exploration into consumption practices that allow for the extraction of authenticity from day-to-day consumption experiences. In addition, exploring the accumulation and leveraging of cultural capital places focus on the individual perspective of the consumer (Arsel & Thompson, 2011; Holt, 1998). As discussed in sections 2.5-2.7, this is of the essence for both constructed and existential authenticity (Cohen, 1988; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). In addition, cultural objects represent a form of cultural capital (Holt, 1998), and extensive field-specific knowledge can be linked to object authenticity as expert knowledge facilitates genuine object authentication (Cornet, 1975). To this end, this section applies Bourdieu's (1984) theories of cultural capital and fields of consumption to underpin the study of interrelated conceptualisation of authenticity in the consumption process, as well as to explore the process itself and the benefits derived by consumers.

2.13 Bourdieu's Fields and Capital

Bourdieu (1984) proposes that social life is a constant competition for status or symbolic capital. To gain symbolic capital the individual draws on three forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social; Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 - Forms of Capital

Form of Capital	Definition (Holt 1998)	Expressed through
Economic Capital	Financial Resources	Consumption of scarce, luxurious offerings
Cultural Capital	socially rare knowledge, practices, skills and tastes	Idiosyncratic consumption of socially scarce offerings
Social Capital	relationships, affiliations and networks	Durable social networks of mutual recognition and benefit

Competition for symbolic capital takes place within a "field," which is defined as a space of 'conflict and competition'. Society is an aggregation of fields that reflect and

reproduce a particular status game that results in the accrual of social capital (Bourdieu, 1984). There are different fields for different practices – e.g. the academic, political, or religious fields. The field of consumption encompasses consumers’ tastes for food, art, media, fashion, and other lifestyle choices and experiences (Arsel and Thompson 2011; Holt 1998). This thesis examines the intersection between authenticity and the accrual of cultural capital within the field of consumption.

Central to this thesis is the process of cultural capital accumulation. Consumers seek out what they perceive to be authentic goods in the process of accruing cultural capital (Holt 1998) for self-identity purposes (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). In making this argument, Holt (1998) defines an authentic good as artisanal rather than mass produced, and experiences that are seen as further removed from (and thus less contaminated by), commodification and mass production/consumption. However, as discussed in section 2.17, Holt (1998) also acknowledges that *some* consumers leverage their cultural capital to extract authenticity by ‘decommodifying’ mass-produced, mass-cultural offerings.

Arsel and Thompson (2011) apply Bourdieu’s theory to examine ‘demythologizing’ consumption practices. This thesis introduces perceptions of authenticity as a key component. Arsel and Thompson agree with Holt that distinctive fields, such as that of consumption, should be studied not only in aggregate but in their own right. This approach requires cultural capital to be contextualised within the field of consumption under study. This form of cultural capital does not necessarily form part of a broader societal hierarchy but only carries symbolic value in field-specific status games. Rather than replacing the original Bourdieuan view of social hierarchy this view operates alongside it to explain consumption behaviours in specific instances (Arsel & Thompson, 2011).

2.14 The Role of Sub-Culture

Arsel & Thompson (2011) acknowledge that within the field of consumption there are a multiplicity of consumption-oriented communities and subcultures; thus recognising that these contain their own discourses, value systems, practices and status functions (Kozinets, 2002; Leigh et al., 2006; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). Arsel & Thompson (2011) synthesise Bourdieuan fields and capital with subcultures of consumption. They argue for “conceptualising the field of consumption in fragmented terms, roughly equivalent to prior conceptualizations of subcultures of consumption [...]”. This conceptualisation provides “theoretical continuity with the Bourdieuan interest in the

identity value that accrues from the acquisition and possession of (field-dependent) cultural and social capital” (Arsel & Thompson, 2011: 793).

Several studies exist that have looked at the consumption of authenticity in particular sub-cultures (cf. Kim & Jamal, 2007; Leigh et al., 2006; Rickly-Boyd, 2012). However, as discussed in sub-sections 2.11 and 2.16, by choosing particular sub-cultural contexts these focus on consumption in relatively closed-off social hierarchies. Capital accrued within a sub-cultural setting is verified and leveraged for social standing through discourse within that subculture, which provides a source of authenticity (Leigh et al., 2006). While providing evidence of authenticity in consumption of mass-produced and mass-cultural offerings in one’s own society, these studies continue to rely on the object-authentic notion that one must escape relatively more mundane consumption to effectively extract authenticity.

Research indicates the presence of a common contextual basis of self-defined subcultural membership, where members gain subcultural status, or capital, through authenticating acts and authoritative performances (Arnould & Price, 2000). For example by focusing on a context where consumers self-identify as members of a set subculture with a shared purpose – in this case to “collectively sacralize the [MG] brand” (Leigh et al., 2006: 482) – the authenticating actions take place within a set of shared rules and common understandings that are specific to the context. As Leigh et al. (2006: 491) summarise, “the authentication of an MG owner’s individual and collective identity is based not only on personal attributes but also the ability to communicate an identification with the sub cultural construction of what it means to be a “true” member.”

This thesis seeks to challenge this position by looking at sources of authenticity within a context of relatively mundane, day-to-day consumption experiences, where the consumer does not self-identify as a member of a particular sub-culture. The position is taken that in addition to potential sub-cultural membership, consumers extract authenticity from fields of consumption that conform to their self-identity goals (Belk, 1988; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

Previous studies have found that authenticity can be extracted through accruing sub-culturally relevant knowledge (Leigh et al., 2006); communicating one’s knowledge with other sub-cultural members (Leigh et al., 2006); escaping daily reality by joining a community in playing a particular role (Kim & Jamal, 2007); or joining a *communitas* devoted to an alternative lifestyle (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Thus focus tends to be placed on

extracting authenticity through a form of *escape* or *devotion* to a particular consumption practices, beyond that of the daily norm.

This thesis argues that applying fields of consumption as conceptualised by Arsel & Thompson (2011) - as opposed to sub-cultures with explicit and shared values and norms - in an interpretive study of authenticity consumption within a day-to-day consumption context, will aid understanding of the process of consuming authenticity. In addition, it challenges the persistent assumption that contemporary society has been drained of self-identity and meaning (Thompson et al., 2006).

2.15 Authenticity in Mass-produced, Mass-cultural Offerings

Authenticating acts are self-referential behaviours related to the construction or reinforcement of one's sense of self, often associated with concepts such as 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Rickly-Boyd, 2012); authoritative performances are collective cultural displays and rituals that offer integration and a collective sense of identity amongst participants, and make explicit shared ideas, values, and practices of subcultural significance (Arnould & Price, 2000). Cultural capital benefits accrued are limited in value outside of the subcultural context, which makes the wider self-identity benefits questionable. This follows Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott's (2002) argument that the central question of modern tourist is 'who they can be' *on their vacation*, or in the case of Leigh et al. (2006), within a particular subculture.

As an example of this phenomenon, Kim & Jamal (2007: 192) found that the positive self-identity and confidence effects experienced during the renaissance festival did for some informants, to some extent, carry over into everyday life, "for others, such transformation of self remained only at the festival and did not exert significant power on their everyday self outside it." In a similar vein, Rickly-Boyd (2012) found that, for some informants, their level of commitment and the self-identity created through their touristic experience brought on feelings of no longer 'fitting in' with broader society, which would suggest that the identity and symbolic capital benefits accrued do not satisfactorily carry over into broader, main-stream society. In all three cases the main benefits derived were related to membership and standing of the subculture, or a form of subcultural authenticity.

Table 7.2 (Appendix) reviews a selection of consumption studies. This shows that authenticity has positive self-identity and subcultural status effects for the consumer. Rickly-Boyd (2012) and Kim & Jamal (2007: 190), for instance, found that the

consumption of perceived authenticity and feelings of existential authenticity facilitated the shift from one's "everyday self to an "other" more desired one," which the latter implicitly linked to increased feelings of self-empowerment and self-esteem through authenticating acts and authoritative performances.

Rickly-Boyd (2012: 98), in her study of authenticity in the subculture of lifestyle rock climbers, notes that "existential authenticity ultimately comes from fleeting moments and self-examination surrounded by individuals with similar intentions" and describes the climbers as "joined by common belief and purpose," driven to dedicate themselves further and perform better by the hierarchy associated with the subculture of fellow lifestyle climbers, itself a part of the larger subculture of general climbers. The same themes are present in Kim and Jamal's (2007) study of existential authenticity at a renaissance fair, where they study the consumption behaviour of 'highly committed tourists.' In this study the authors found that "active participation in bonding, friendship, identity-seeking and transcendence (self-making)" were of importance, as participants "engaged in meaning-making through a variety of practices and rites on the fair ground and in social groups" (ibid: 195-6).

The contextual bases for authenticity research adheres to the presupposition that "authenticity is best forged and revealed in "boundary" or extreme existential situations" (Golomb, 1995: 303) – particularly evident in the contexts of lifestyle rock climbing and highly committed renaissance fair participants (i.e. in full costume and who live at the grounds for the duration). The shared logic is thus that breaking from the norms of the 'heavily rationalised' activities of contemporary society facilitates the quest for the authentic self (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Wang, 1999).

If the 'quest for authenticity' is indeed a search for the meaning and self-identity of which contemporary society has been drained (Arnould & Price, 2000; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Holt, 1998; Thompson et al., 2006), and consumers are able to extract this through subcultural consumption of commonplace objects and experiences (Kim & Jamal, 2007; Leigh et al., 2006; Rickly-Boyd, 2012), this opens to the question of how consumers perceive and consume authenticity within day-to-day consumption experiences within their broader domestic society, where their aim is not to build context-specific cultural capital or status; where they do not self-identify as being part of a set subculture of consumption; and where they cannot rely on the shared understandings, values, and authoritative performances to the same extent.

2.16 Bourdieu and the process of authenticity consumption

Holt (1998) and Arsel and Thompson's (2011) argue that consumers leverage their field-dependent cultural capital and specialised knowledge to extract authenticity from commoditised products and experiences. Holt (1998) presents two primary methods employed by consumers in extracting authenticity: collective (i.e. authoritative) performances and through connoisseurship (essentially authenticating acts). The latter requires that consumers accrue field-dependent capital that allows them to consume commoditised offerings in an idiosyncratic way, thus appreciating aspects of it that are unavailable to the average consumer, which offers a way of extracting authenticity. This practice is evident in Leigh et al. (2006), particularly for respondents who sought to restore object authenticity in their vehicles:

"...the owner must study many books detailing the aesthetic detail of an original MG. These details can be extremely fine, including having the right brand of spark plugs, an MG-brand cap, or even the original trunk wrench set. In addition, the owner should photographically document all aspects of restoration to demonstrate his work at shows, club meetings, and other social gatherings." (Leigh et al., 2006: 485)

Evident from this quote is that the consumer amasses and leverages considerable field-specific knowledge to essentially recreate the original appearance of a mass-produced car. Through this process the consumer creates a sense of object authenticity despite the mass-produced nature of the product, but also existential authenticity through a sense of achievement throughout the process of restoration, as well as by gaining the recognition of other subcultural members able to appreciate the outcome. Similar findings are present in Beverland (2006) and Beverland et al. (2008), who find that consumers use field-specific knowledge of wine and beer, respectively, to determine the (in)authenticity of particular brands and bottlings.

2.17 Bourdieu and Individual Differences in Authenticity Consumption

It is important to note that theorists have attempted to account for individual differences in the consumption of authenticity. Holt (1998: 5-6) argues that in "postmodern cultures, it is increasingly difficult to infer status directly from consumption objects". He explains that expressing individuality requires that consumers "emphasize the distinctiveness of consumption practices themselves, apart from the cultural contents to which they are applied." For example, Holt (1998) divides people into high and low cultural capital

(HCC and LCC respectively) and argues that each group has developed different strategies for dealing with postmodern conditions.

Holt (1998) divides respondents into HCC and LCC depending on their own and their father's education and occupation. The value assigned to different levels of education and occupation as assigned by Holt is presented in table 2.3. The formula for calculating cultural capital is "upbringing (father's education + occupation/2) + education + occupation" (Holt 1998: 23).

Table 2.3 – Holt's (1998) Cultural Capital Values

Education	Occupation	Point Value
<i>High school or less</i>	<i>Un/skilled or manual labour</i>	1
<i>Some college</i>	<i>Un/skilled service or clerical</i>	2
<i>B.A.</i>	<i>Sales or low-level technical/managerial</i>	3
<i>Masters/some post-graduate study</i>	<i>High-level technical, or low cultural (e.g. education including secondary)</i>	4
<i>PhD or 'elite B.A.' from a prestigious institution</i>	<i>Cultural producers</i>	5

Adapted from Holt (1998: 23)

Holt's (1998) links self-identity with the process of accruing cultural capital, and self-identity projects might comprise social class identity. Bourdieu posits that the accrual of symbolic capital results in class stratification within the field and by implication society at large. Hence, the pursuance of cultural capital symbolically reproduces class distinctions (Arsel and Thompson 2011; Henry 2005; Holt 1998).

Holt (1998) argues that in societies of mass (re-)production, consumption, and homogenisation, expressing an 'individualistic sense of subjectivity' through the consumption of goods, services and experiences is increasingly difficult (also Clarke 1993; Holt 1995). Holt's (1998) argues that consumers with high cultural capital, in

societies wrought by homogenisation, develop alternative and more distinguished means of consumption. Through their HCC they develop a form of connoisseurship which allows them to consume spaces, objects and experiences in a rarefied manner not available to those of low cultural capital, which reinforces class distinctions. Hence, consumer tastes and ability to identify that which is authentic reflect and display the consumer's level of cultural capital. Bourdieu & Wacquant (1992) state that a field is an area of competition and conflict in which consumers (in this case) compete to establish monopoly over a particular type of capital.

Holt (1998) argues that LCC subjectivity is 'local and collective', and depends on the community acknowledging particular practices and tastes, making their subjectivity parallel to core members of subcultures; in contrast, HCC subjectivity is individual and idiosyncratic. Holt (1998) further states that LCC consumers are of no interest to studies of authenticity because LCC consumers are concerned with the functional aspects of goods and services and to a greater extent preoccupied with the rigours of everyday life (paying bills etc.). Thus LCCs exhibit consumer subjectivity "through passionate and routinized participation in particular consumption activities" (Holt, 1998: 14). These routinised consumption activities are in the majority of cases are a collective endeavour that produce a collective sense of identity and community. Thus LCCs derive a sense of authenticity through their participation in shared performance of particular rituals, tradition or other significant behaviour, which are termed 'authoritative performances' (Arnould & Price, 2000).

In contrast to this, Holt (1998) argues that HCCs are a valid subject for to authenticity research because HCCs locate subjectivity in externally authentic sources, but also develop connoisseurship which accounts for the internal construction of authenticity. HCCs have the ability to "*locate subjectivity in what they perceive to be authentic goods, artisanal rather than mass produced, and auratic experiences that are perceived as removed from, and so minimally contaminated by, the commodity form*" (Holt, 1998: 14). Holt supplies empirical support from interviews with HCCs where they describe deliberately seeking to experience – and shop in – social milieus that are 'completely different' to the highly polished surroundings to which they are accustomed.

Holt (1998) presents connoisseurship as antithetical to extrinsic (object) authenticity, as the act of authentication is carried out by the consumer's idiosyncratic knowledge and consumption practices as opposed to requiring the verification of an expert. Holt states

that consumer subjectivity results from appropriating, rather than avoiding, mass culture. The process of mass culture appropriation requires the connoisseur's idiosyncratic approach and specialised knowledge. Hence, connoisseurs are able to utilise aspects consumption of commonplace objects or experiences that are either ignored by or not available (due to lacking knowledge) to mainstream consumers to derive consumer subjectivity. Connoisseurs possess a refinement of vocabulary, taste, style, and mode of appreciation that differentiates their process of consumption. For example, the connoisseur would savour a whisky for the poached Comice pear aroma, oily body feel, and exotic fruit flavour, whereas the average consumer would only appreciate the general sweetness. Holt (1998) argues that connoisseurship and differentiation of consumption can be applied to virtually any Bourdieuan field.

In addition, eclecticism is an important aspect of connoisseurship; Holt postulates that in addition to applying a depth of knowledge to their consumption practices, connoisseurs combine an eclectic mix of commonplace offerings into unusual constellations. For example, Holt argues that when asked to cater for a special occasion connoisseurs (HCCs) would present an "intercontinental pastiche bearing no resemblance to normative combinations (all the more individualized due to the exotic components)" (Holt 1998: 16). In contrast, non-connoisseurs (LCCs) who would present normative combinations such as a roast turkey with the 'all the trimmings'.

HCC connoisseurs thus derive a sense of individual identity in the face of the homogeneity of mass culture through developing idiosyncratic and expertly informed consumption practices. The concept of connoisseurship can be accounted for by N. Wang's (1999) notion of *existential* authenticity. Existential authenticity sees the consumer as active in creating the authenticity of the *self*, so that an authentic sense of self is created through particular consumption practices. This view of the internal construction of authenticity adds additional depth to the understanding of authenticity and its importance in consumption.

Holt (1998) argues for a focus on particular fields in order to generate a contextualised understanding of process, and states that field context is important as each field holds social identity value. For example, Holt (1998) states that art, the traditional focus of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, constitutes only a 'small fraction' of all consumption fields and that more focus must be given to the likes of hobbies, fashion, reading and food.

However Holt's argument that the focus should only be on HCC consumers limits any findings to small segment of consumers. Hence, Holt approaches his exploration of authenticity in consumption habits from a viewpoint predisposed towards a particular set of consumption behaviours by dividing people according to their aggregate social standing, deduced by profession, education and paternal sociocultural heritage. The basis of this argument is that the 'field' interests held by HCCs are a mainstream cultural ideal. This is contradictory to the initial argument presented by Holt (1998), i.e. that the acquisition of cultural capital should be examined in the context of its field, as each field holds social identity value. The focus on HCCs excludes certain fields of consumption which are bound to mass culture, for example a secretive private men's club would be favoured over a public house.

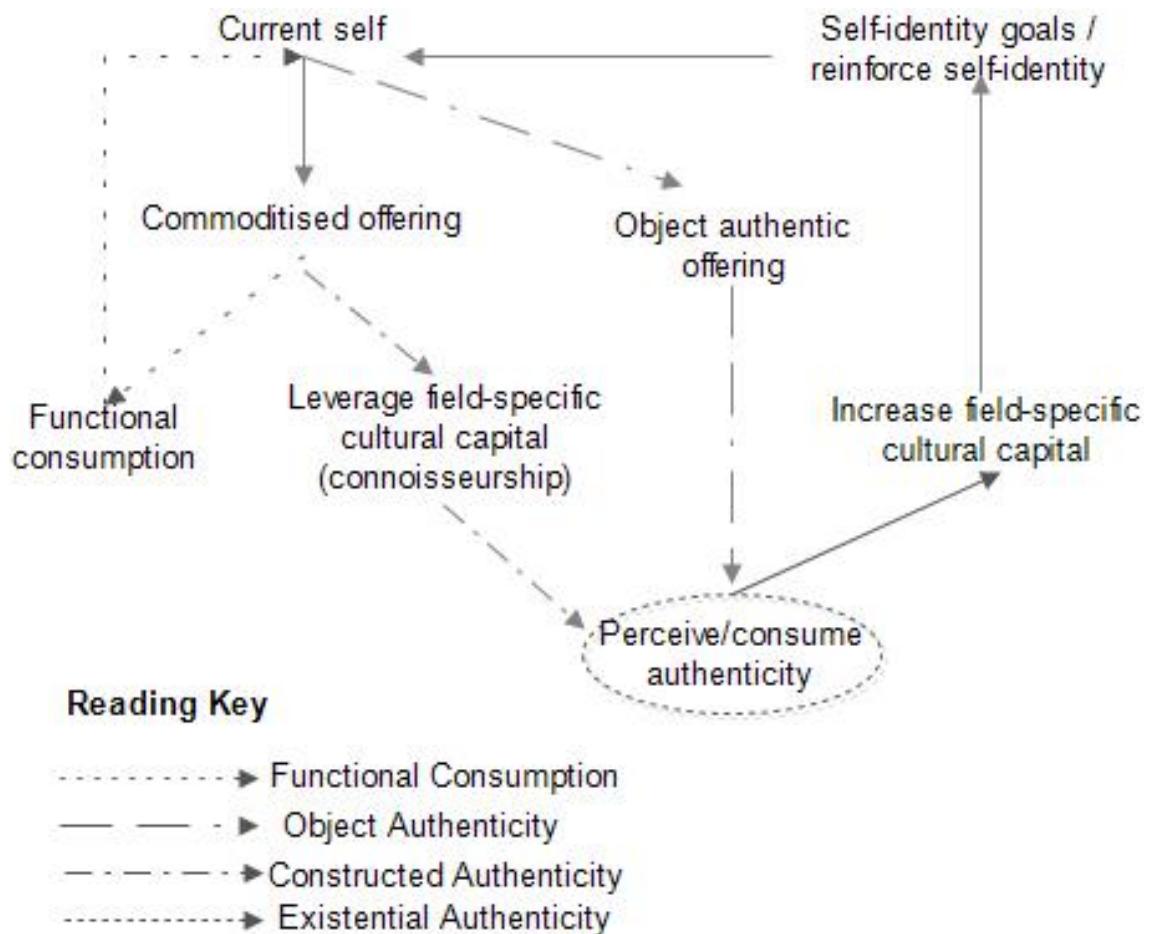
In contrast to this, Leigh et al. (2006) conducted a study on the meaning of authenticity for the members of a MG motoring club. They found concerns for authenticity prevalent, but like HCC consumers these consumption subculture members were considered with origins and wider object authenticity, existential authenticity, as well as communal aspects of belonging. The findings of this study go some way towards highlight the importance of authenticity is not limited to the consumption activities of consumers with high symbolic capital or aggregate cultural capital, but can be used in understanding the consumption behaviour of subcultures at large.

The distinction between HCC and LCC does not inform this study, and it is held – as per the example above – that consumers at either end of the LCC-HCC spectrum has the ability to leverage their cultural capital to extract authenticity. With this caveat in mind, Holt's (1998) notions of connoisseurship and eclecticism is found to be useful in understanding the process of consuming authenticity, particularly as it relates to constructed and existential authenticity.

The process of leveraging one's cultural capital to extract authenticity, as described by Holt, relates back to constructed and existential authenticity, where authenticity in consumption is derived from a consumer's particular set of expectations, fantasies, and knowledge (section 2.10.2). Drawing on Bourdieu's (1984) cultural capital and field of consumption as conceptualised by Arsel & Thompson (2011) adds an additional layer of understanding to the process. In addition to showing the impact of a particular consumer's perception, these are further defined through the notion of cultural capital, and the link between the consumption of authenticity to personal identity benefits is strengthened

through the building of social capital. Figure 2.3-4 shows how Bourdieu's theories relate to the consumption of authenticity as discussed in sections 2.10.1-2.10.3.

Figure 2.3-4 – Bourdieu and the Consumption of Authenticity



2.18 Section Conclusion

This section has introduced Bourdieu's (1984) notions of the field of consumption and cultural capital as a means of better understanding the consumption of authenticity. Combining Holt's (1998) application of cultural capital as a means of deriving authenticity through connoisseurship and Arsel and Thompson's (2011) definition of field-dependent capital, offers an explanation of how consumers derive value from these field-specific consumption activities. Holt's (1998) notions of connoisseurship and eclecticism shed light on the process of constructing authenticity, while Arsel and Thompson's (2011) conceptualisation of fields of consumptions as roughly equivalent to less strict subcultures allows for the inclusion of authoritative performances – borrowed from research on subcultures (Arnould & Price, 2000) – to be applied to less rigidly defined fields of consumption.

Figure 2.3-4 is presented as a representation of how the three main conceptualisations of authenticity relate to the consumption of authenticity within a particular field of consumption, while field-specific knowledge provides the link between commoditised offerings and the construction of authenticity. Similarly, the accumulation of cultural capital provides a route from the consumption of authenticity to self-identity goals.

2.19 Chapter Conclusion: Summary of Findings and Research Aim

To date authenticity research has tended focus on the search for the exotic toured object, but drawing upon a Bourdieuan framework identifies a gap for studies that move beyond the assumption of contemporary inauthenticity to explore day-to-day, domestic sources of authenticity in consumption. This thesis draws upon the conceptualisation of field of consumption propounded by Arsel & Thompson (2011) and subcultural capital as proposed by (Holt, 1998), which are derivative of Bourdieu's cultural capital and fields of competition, but limited in circumstance to the value derived within a field of consumption. As eloquently argued by Taylor (2001: 14), "if the concept of authenticity is to have any legitimate place in discussions of culture, its definition must rest with those who "make up" that culture." Hence there is a need for research to explore the concept of authenticity in the process of consumption, drawing on the actual experience of consumers within a particular field.

Literature which relates to the process by which consumers can apply cultural capital to extract authenticity from commoditised experiences, which in turn generates identity benefits, was critically reviewed. It is argued that the majority of studies to date have been held back by the logic of object authenticity, as there remains a tendency for contexts of study to be removed from the mainstream, day-to-day consumption of mass-cultural, mass-produced experiences and objects. This is a reflection of the object-authentic notion that contemporary society has been drained of sources of meaning and self-identity due to homogenisation, mass-culture, and mass-production. Thus a gap is identified for research that explores the process of consuming authenticity and the benefits derived from a consumer perspective, viewed through the lens of Holt (1998) and Arsel and Thompson's (2011) interpretations of Bourdieu's (1984) concept of fields of consumption and cultural capital.

Based on a review of literature pertaining to the three main conceptualisations of authenticity – as object, constructed, and existential (Wang, 1999) – a framework is suggested that highlights (1) how each conceptualisations relates to the consumption of

authenticity as a means of meeting self-identity goals (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010); and (2) the interrelated nature of these conceptualisations in the process of consuming authenticity (cf. Belhassen et al., 2008; Leigh et al., 2006; Mkono, 2012). Represented in figure 2.3-4, this framework also shows the role of cultural capital in terms of constructed authenticity, as well as how authenticity relates to self-identity benefits

This review has highlighted a series of gaps in our current understanding of authenticity consumption. One gap is found in the continued influence of object-authentic logic throughout the study of authenticity consumption – as summarised in section 2.11, this is represented in the commonly held notion, fundamental to much authenticity research, that contemporary society has been drained of meaning and sources of authentic self-identity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2011). This has led to a dearth of studies which explore the possibility of deriving authenticity from the consumption of that which is objectively inauthentic. A second gap is located in the idea that the three dominant conceptions of authenticity are often viewed as separate and essentially irreconcilable (cf. Reisner & Steiner, 2006; Wang, 1999) – though with some notable exceptions, including Kolar & Zabkar (2010) and Wang (2007). The review suggests a need for a more holistic view of authenticity, with each of the three dominant views seen not as divergent and noncombinative, but as distinct *sources* of authenticity in consumption.

The review leads to the following research questions:

1. Can the framework developed in figure 2.3-4 explain the process of day to day consumption of authenticity?
2. What are consumers' perceived self-identity goals, and how are these reinforced in the consumption of authenticity?
3. What is the process of this reinforcement, and how does the *form* of authenticity contribute?
4. What happens when the consumer's perception of authenticity changes ?

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter details the research design and philosophical choices that underpinned this thesis. It contributes to the thesis through justifying the appropriateness of following an interpretivist philosophy and qualitative research design in the study of authenticity, and contributing to the consumer culture theory (CCT) body of research. Consideration is also given to alternative positions and their merits, with the aim of further solidifying the appropriateness of following a consumer culture theory-guided interpretivist philosophical and qualitative methodological approach.

This chapter follows the literature review, which critically examined the three main conceptualisations of authenticity – object, constructed, and existential (Wang, 1999) – and argued that these can usefully be brought together by using Bourdieu’s (1984) cultural capital as a lens through which to view the process of consuming authenticity. It was concluded that:

- There is a need for research that a clearer understanding of the process of consuming authenticity;
- There is a lack of insight into the benefits derived from this process from a consumer perspective, particularly within relatively homogenised Western cultures;
- While traditionally viewed as separate and essentially irreconcilable conceptualisations (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Wang, 1999), focusing on the *consumer’s* process of authenticity consumption allows for the exploration of the interrelated nature of the three core conceptualisations of authenticity.

To address these gaps, the aim of this thesis is to “explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences”. This leads to the following research objectives:

- Develop a more holistic understanding of authenticity through synthesising different conceptualisations
- To generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer’s overall perception of authenticity.

- To develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity
- Provide insight into *how* consumers perceive authenticity in a specific consumption context
- Identify the identity benefits consumers derive from the process of consuming authenticity

The following sections explore the two main philosophical approaches discussed in the literature, and aim to highlight the suitability of taking an interpretivist approach. This is followed by a discussion of qualitative and quantitative research and their relative disadvantages in addressing the objectives of this study. The final sections introduce key methods of material collection in an ethnographic study, and discuss their merits in addressing the objectives as well as key critiques that have been leveraged against them, and how these can be answered in order to ensure suitable academic rigour.

3.2 Research Philosophy

An understanding and appreciation of the philosophical underpinnings of one's methodological approach is crucial to social sciences (Quinlan, 2011). This section contains a discussion of the ontological (what constitutes reality) and epistemological (what constitutes knowledge thereof; Hughes & Sharrock, 1997) choices that were made for this thesis. This helps benefit the “quality of research by encouraging a degree of awareness about the methodological implications of certain decisions” and “can help guard against more obvious errors” (Seale, 1999: ix). This section provides an overview of philosophical stances before arguing for the appropriateness of adopting an interpretivist approach to this thesis.

There is a range of stances that differ to varying extents in terms of their ontological and epistemological stances – e.g. logical empiricism, relativism, realism, and critical realism on the positivist side (Easton, 2002), and e.g. existential phenomenology, post-structuralism, and critical theory on the interpretivist side (Hunt, 1991; Shankar & Goulding, 2001). In essence these debates are thus between the fundamental ontological and epistemological oppositions associated with the umbrella terms of ‘positivism’ and ‘interpretivism’ (Brewer, 2009; Hughes & Sharrock, 1997; Shankar & Goulding, 2001). Indeed, it is commonly noted that the growth of interpretive approaches fuelled a “spirited debate” between the two sides (Hunt, 1991).

This thesis falls within the remit of consumer research. Within consumer research it has been argued that the debate between positivist versus interpretivist methodological approaches and their relative validity has grown rather stale, and that there now exists a considerably wider acceptance of diverse methods of studying marketing phenomena (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Brown, 2003; Goulding, 2005). However, in order not to succumb to the relatively easier position of a methodological ‘puritan’ (Foxall, 2000), convinced of the undisputable superiority of one approach over the other, it remains important to appreciate the relative strengths of each approach. This allows the researcher to make a deliberate evaluation of the paradigms available and their relative strengths in relation to the aims of one’s research (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1992). Thus this section will briefly outline the core tenets of each approach, and argue for the appropriateness of an interpretive grounding for this study.

3.2.1 Positivism

Giddens (1977) summarised the positivist philosophy as grounded in some or all of four particular stances. These are:

1. Reality consists only of that which can be observed;
2. Philosophy, while acknowledged as a separate discipline, must be grounded in empirical findings;
3. All enquiry must aspire to be scientific;
4. A distinction is drawn between *value* and *fact*; values cannot be the basis of facts.

Ontologically, positivism favours the view of reality as objective, singular, and observable (Hirschman, 1986). Epistemologically, it relies on reproducible data most commonly extracted through quantitative methods. However qualitative positivist studies are not beyond the scope of the paradigm and such methods are occasionally employed (Hunt, 1991; Phillips, 1996). As such, positivism tests pre-existing theoretical contributions and relies on the application of logic in the construction of novel theories which can be scientifically tested, i.e. deduction (Remenyi, Williams, Money, & Swartz, 1998; Robson, 1997).

As discussed in section 2.4, this ontological stance reflects the basic premise of (strict) object authenticity; that is, authenticity is seen as being external to human intervention,

and as such must be discovered and appraised by persons of relevant expertise (Trilling, 1972), as opposed to being dependent on the perspective of the consumer. With this study aiming to explore consumers' process of consuming authenticity in settings that are not necessarily *objectively* authentic - and certainly have not been deemed such by experts in the matter, instead relying on the *perceptions* of the consumer – a positivist paradigm presents itself as unsuitable. Following the ontological stance of constructed (and to some extent existential) authenticity (cf. Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988; sections 2.5, 2.6; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Wang, 1999), it is suggested that authenticity, from the consumer's perspective, is not *necessarily* an external reality, but reliant upon one's personal perspective of that being consumed. However, an appreciation for the existence of objectively authentic elements within any given context of consumption remains important.

3.2.2 Interpretivism

Where positivism is concerned with a singular external reality to be observed through scientific means, interpretivism allows for the existence of multiple subjective realities that are individually constructed (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997); and if reality is constructed rather than objective, "it follows that we are active and implicated in that process" (Shankar & Goulding, 2001: 8). This is a significant point of difference to positivism. Seeing reality as a fixed entity, or 'basic belief' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), positivists do not need to engage with ontological debates (Shankar & Goulding, 2001). From this follows that a positivist is more concerned with the reliability, validity and sampling issues, while interpretivists tend to engage in philosophical debates of ontology and what constitutes reality (Shankar & Goulding, 2001).

While positivism is deductive and concerned with theory *testing*, interpretivism is inductive – that is, as opposed to starting with theory and either proving or disproving it, the interpretivist paradigm allows for the research to start from the materials collected and work 'backwards' towards theory (Robson, 1997). However, the influence of the positivist paradigm is such that the process of research, even for interpretivists, often starts with the accumulation of theoretical knowledge (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997). The difference then arises at the stage of interpretation, where interpretivism goes beyond disproving a particular theory, and allows for the exploration of outcomes that may be surprising to the researcher (Hackley, 2003). While this level of interpretation allows for greater depth of understanding, one must also "always remember that what we are offering is only *an* interpretation not *the* interpretation" (Shankar & Goulding, 2001: 8);

thus philosophical questions of epistemology and ontology are not the only concern, one must also ensure that any given interpretation remains rooted in the theories that underpins one's study – regardless of whether the findings support or disconfirm them.

This approach thus seems to more naturally intersect with *constructed* and *existential* – and, indeed, the proposed delineation of “sincere” object – authenticity, as these rely on the perceptions of the consumer (Cohen, 1988; Cornet, 1975; Wang, 1999).

3.3 Ethnography

Because consumer behaviour, and acts of consumption, are generally not easily recalled – and because of issues of idealisation in self-disclosure and the corruption of interpersonal influence – ethnography, through observation and critical reflection, provides an effective means of discovering and validating processes of consumption (Elliot & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). It allows the researcher to uncover rich, symbolic details of the process of consumption (Goulding, 2003), and is particularly suited to understanding consumer experience as it requires the researcher to look at multiple aspects of consumption, e.g. social, personal, spatial and temporal (Healy, Beverland, Oppewal, & Sands, 2007). In essence, “ethnography allows researchers to explore and engage in the discovery of meanings within the authentic context of the customer retail outlet” (Healy et al., 2007: 756).

3.3.1 Ethnography in Consumer Research

Ethnography is a means of conducting a naturalistic enquiry of cultures and cultural phenomena (Celsi, Rose, & Leigh, 1993; Sherry, 1991), and aims to explore activities in which cultural members invest a significant amount of time (Celsi et al., 1993). For instance, Schouten & McAlexander (1995) employed a longitudinal ethnographic approach in the study of the subcultural consumption of Harley-Davidson motorcycles. By employing this methodology the authors were able to explore the major concerns of one particular subculture of consumption, including the importance of a commitment to authenticity as a means of creating across-group hierarchies amongst members. Similarly, Celsi et al. (1993) used an ethnographic approach in exploring high-risk leisure consumption in the form of sky diving, and the importance of the activity as a means of building self-identity. Their study also uncovered subcultural norms and hierarchies embedded in the act of consumption, and the role of authenticity in subcultural hierarchy construction.

More recently ethnographic methods have also been applied in the study of authenticity within consumption through Leigh et al.'s (2006) exploration of the quest for authenticity in the subculture of MG ownership. Utilising an ethnographic approach allowed the researchers to go beyond the widely held dialectic relationship between object and existential authenticity (cf. Wang, 1999) to explore the multiple meanings of authenticity within a particular subcultural context (Leigh et al., 2006). Belhassen et al. (2008) utilised a similar ethnographic approach in studying the search for authenticity in pilgrim experiences. These longitudinal explorations of *in-situ* consumption led the authors of both studies to suggest that, in a subcultural consumption context, consumers intertwine numerous conceptualisations of authenticity (Belhassen et al., 2008; Leigh et al., 2006) with a level of fluidity that suggests the need for a holistic understanding of the construction of authenticity within the process of consumption. This relates back to interrelationships between conceptualisations of authenticity as discussed in sections 2.7 and 2.11, summarily represented in figure 2.3-4. Thus ethnography has been shown to be effective in exploring interrelationships between conceptualisations of authenticity in a subcultural consumption context. However, in line with the research proposed for this study, there remains a need for deeper understanding of the role and nature of authenticity in day-to-day consumption experiences (Napoli et al., 2014).

3.3.2 Ethnography and Consumption

Ethnography in consumer research is based on the supposition that social meaning can be derived through the act of consumption, which acts as a cultural communicator (Schouten, 1991). It is often employed in consumer research as a means of explicating consumption behaviour (Elliot & Jankel-Elliott, 2003), e.g. in Celsi et al.'s (1993) study of high-risk consumption and Schouten's (1991) exploration the symbolic, identity-building consumption of plastic surgery. Ethnography in consumer research should aim to explain how culture constructs consumption and experiences of its members, and how members' consumption and experiences construct culture (Schwandt, 2000). Thus ethnography is suitable to studies of lifestyle, culture and subcultures (Stewart, 1998), as exemplified by the above discussed studies.

As a culturally significant activity engaged in continuously throughout the day, consumption is therefore a suitable context for ethnographic research (Celsi et al., 1993). The research design of this thesis drew on a core tenet of ethnography in taking the stance that social meaning can be, and indeed is, derived through the act of consumption (Schouten, 1991; Schwandt, 2000). There are two reasons for this decision.

First, two conceptualisations of authenticity – i.e. constructed (Cohen, 1988) and existential (Wang, 1999) - rely on the subjective perspective of the consumer, thus the researcher must “appreciate and approximate the tacit knowledge of consumer behaviour” and realise that the object of study is consumer reality; not one’s theory (Brown, 2003: 206). Consequently the focus of this thesis is on the consumer, their process of consumption, and their perception of that being consumed. Second the focus of ethnographic interpretation lies not with the individual brand, product or service, but the presupposition that behaviours are instilled with meaning in consumption (Goulding, 2003; Schwandt, 2000). The goal is to contextualise and make connections among elements of culture in a way that is credible to those under study, in their own experience (Lofland, 1995).

3.4 Ethnographic Method: Issues

At its core, ethnography is concerned with collecting materials, in a natural setting and under natural conditions, that facilitate the meaningful interpretation of a human experience (Brewer, 2009; Lofland, 1995). However, the mechanisms underlying behaviour are rarely expressly articulated by participants (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Healy et al., 2007). The goal of the ethnographer is thus to uncover and gain an understanding of these mechanisms, and to represent them in a manner that not only provides academic value at a theoretical level, but would make sense if read by the subjects of the study (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Marcus & Cushman, 1982). This requires that the researcher immerse themselves in the context (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Brewer, 2009; Goulding, 2005; Healy et al., 2007), as it allows them to uncover not only *what* is happening, but *why* (Brewer, 2009; Kelly & Gibbons, 2008), thus gaining an understanding of “tacit knowledge ... contextual understandings that are manifest in routines, nods, silences, humor, postures as well as statements about belief and value.” (Arnould & Price, 2006: 251).

However, it is also the source of persistent critique of the method. As the researcher is deeply imbedded into the collection and analysis of materials, their own experience, knowledge, and feelings impose on the materials collected a personal bias (Borman, LeCompte, & Goetz, 1986; Healy et al., 2007; Marcus & Cushman, 1982). In essence, this critique is grounded in the fact that the researcher acts as both filter and interpreter of the materials collected (Borman et al., 1986), which raises questions of whether bias leads insufficient breadth of the materials collected, and the final validity of the conclusions drawn with respect to the researcher’s own subjective bias.

The most ferocious response to this critique comes from ‘postmodern reflexive ethnography’, proponents of which refute the possibility of objectivity in social science regardless of the method(s) used (Brewer, 2009). In this vein, Dey (1993) argues that regardless of method, all data is ‘produced’ by the researcher through choices of location, research design, questions, and approach; all of which is a part of the process of ‘creating’ the data as collected by the researcher. Thus the choices made by the researcher and the limitations set upon the data collected and its interpretation (whether positivist or interpretivist in nature) by their subjective knowledge, interest and approach, renders all data personal and subjective (see also Hammersley, 1990). However, postmodernist ethnographers are equally critical of their own approach. Taken to its extreme, Brewer (2009: 24) reflects that the postmodernist critique of social science, including ethnography, results in a situation where “everything solid melts into air every structure dissolves and every truth statement is contingent and relative; we are left merely with rhetoric, discourse and language games about our knowledge and truth.”

This realisation within ethnography, and the effects it has had on the method, is referred to as the ‘double crisis’ of ethnography (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998): the crisis of representation (i.e. whether ethnography can produce knowledge that is universally valid and which accurately captures and/or represents the social world); and the crisis of legitimation (i.e. whether, owing to the partial, selective and subjective nature of ethnographic descriptions, traditional criteria of evaluation – validity, reliability, generalizability – can legitimately be employed) (Brewer, 2009). However, rather than leading to the abandonment of the ethnographic approach, these critiques have led to fundamental changes in how ethnography is viewed and executed. Most fundamentally, some contemporary proponents of ethnography argue that the realist-ethnographer ideal of objectivity, and removing the ‘voice’ of the researcher (and often the researched) from the text so as to produce a more authoritative account (Marcus & Cushman, 1982) should be abandoned in favour of ‘tales of the field’ (Brewer, 2009; van Maanen, 1988). Thus the researcher should be reflexive of their methodology, their involvement, biases, and subjectivity and how this bears down on the data collected (Altheide & Johnson, 1998; Brewer, 2009; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

The following sections detail some of the key steps that have been suggested as a means of producing an ethnographic account

3.3.1 Personal Discipline of the Researcher

On the most basic, personal level, answering this critique begins with the personal discipline of the researcher (Borman et al., 1986); it requires the researcher is self-conscious of their bias and meticulously examines, at every stage of the research process, the questions asked, interactions with informants and environments, and conclusions drawn. Erickson (1973) refers to this stance as “disciplined subjectivity.” Similarly, it is good practice for ethnographers to seek external confirmation through discussions with colleagues and mentors to aid clarification and gain external insight into one’s materials and conclusions, which helps highlight biases (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Borman et al., 1986; Gherardi & Turner, 1999).

3.3.2 Triangulation and Disconfirming Observations

In addition to this personal discipline one should adopt analytic ditto. At its core this requires the use of multiple sources of materials, i.e. by the utilising multiple research techniques as opposed to relying solely on interviews or participant observation, which facilitates triangulation of results (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Borman et al., 1986; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Healy et al., 2007). This necessitates that materials collected and conclusions drawn from said materials are only ever given weight if corroborated by findings collected from a separate source or using another means of collection; until such corroboration occurs, they must be considered tentative (Borman et al., 1986). In addition, it requires that the researcher test their conclusions by taking into account negative instances in the materials which contradict conclusions drawn (Borman et al., 1986; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984); this aids the process of refining and broadening conclusions and minimise positive, subjective, bias. This partially addresses the critique of the impact of the researcher’s bias and feelings upon conclusions generated from ethnographic research (Borman et al., 1986)

3.3.3 Hermeneutic Circle & Reflexivity

Finally, the researcher must not succumb to relative ease of simply stating patterns in the materials collected, but acquire a depth of understanding in interpretation that facilitates novel insight (Healy et al., 2007). A greater depth of understanding, and critical insight into recurring patterns and their individual and holistic relevance, can be gained by employing the hermeneutic circle as a part of the ongoing analysis of findings (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; Healy et al., 2007). This technique requires that the researcher moves back and forth through their materials, considering parts in relation to the whole and the whole in relation to its parts, comparing facts and abstract meaning (Alvesson &

Sköldberg, 2000): “*the meaning of a part can only be understood if it is related to the whole*” (ibid: 92 [emphasis in original]). As with triangulation and personal discipline, this increases the robustness of interpretation and conclusions (Healy et al., 2007).

Hermeneutics was developed for the study of biblical and ancient texts, where the *part* might be a passage in the bible and the *whole* the complete bible. However it has since been applied more widely in social science, where the *part* might be a particular observation, situation, or interview, and the *whole* the phenomena under study through the materials at hand. Alvesson & Sköldberg (2000) posit that through its application to social science research, hermeneutics has increasingly become linked with empathy; whereby the researcher uses their broader insight, as well as their creative ability, to understand the meaning of an act more clearly. This, they argue, makes it possible for the researcher – with their particular depth of knowledge and differing insights – to understand informants and their actions better than they – the informants – might understand themselves. Thus using a hermeneutic approach to understanding social action helps answer the question of *why* certain actions are taken, in addition to *what* these actions might be.

By taking the stance that the part can only be understood in relation to the whole, and appreciating the subjective influence of the researcher and their particular knowledge as a part of the process of interpretation, hermeneutics requires and inherently brings about internal consistency of interpretation (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000). This has been referred to as the criteria of ‘coherence’ (Madison, 1990) or ‘internal control’ (Ödman, 1979). For ethnographic research, which is ideally collected over a prolonged period of time and often interpreted both during and after collection (Brewer, 2009; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), this ensures that inconsistencies in interpretation that may arise during the process of researching a particular phenomenon does not go unnoticed. This partially addresses the critique of the impact of the researchers subjective bias and feelings upon interpretation of the materials collected (Borman et al., 1986; Healy et al., 2007). A second way in which this critique is answered comes through the importance of ‘outer control’ (Ödman, 1979) or ‘agreement’ (Madison, 1990), which emphasises the need to external consistency; through highlighting how the materials collected and the researchers interpretation relates to previous findings within the area of research, and the extent to which findings are in agreement with these as well as *why* they might be contradictory (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000). The latter must necessarily be facilitated by logical

academic reasoning so as to facilitate a coherent argument in objection to current understanding.

Moreover, an acknowledgement of the interpreter's preconceptions and the fact that these will transform during the process of interpretation is inherent in the process itself; this critical reflection upon the preconceptions brought to the process by the researcher, and their development through interpretation, allow for interpretation that goes beyond the level of "common-sense" understanding (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000; Madison, 1990). In its original application as a means of understanding historical and biblical writings, it is not data or facts that is interpreted, but the text itself, which through contextualisation renders a depth of understanding from which facts can emerge (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000). The same is true of the study of social actions, as ethnography through e.g. participant observation, where it is not necessarily the action or belief itself that is interpreted, but its deeper meanings for the phenomenon studied, which is in line with the fundamental aims of ethnography discussed above. During this process 'facts' emerge that may later be considered incorrect in the light of new findings and interpretations (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000); in essence, hermeneutic interpretation works by the researcher continuously reflecting on their own understanding of facts (*parts*) in relation to each other and themes that either reinforce or disconfirm previous 'facts' through a growing understanding of the *whole*.

Through the combined focus of internal and external consistency and the importance placed on continuous reflection on the researcher's own (fluid and evolving) preconceptions, the application of the hermeneutic approach to interpretation thus helps answer the critiques leveraged against the subjective bias of ethnographic research. Thus essential to reflexivity, as eloquently summarised by Hammersley & Atkinson (1983: 17), is the belief that "rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate the effects of the researcher, we should set about understanding them". This aspect of hermeneutic interpretation also aligns with the core emphasis of participant observation as a part of ethnographic study, which holds the researcher's experience as central to developing understanding (Brewer, 2009; Burgess, 1982).

3.4.1 Participant Observation & Observant Participation

Ethnographers acknowledge that "in everyday life, culture's mechanisms usually remain unarticulated by participants" (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994: 485) and as such may not be able to fully recall details of their consumption processes (Elliot & Jankel-Elliott,

2003). Participant observation is a summary term that describes the collection of various materials that may shed light on a particular activity and its underlying meanings for participants (Brewer, 2009; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). While often used as a synonym for ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), the latter can legitimately take others forms such as non-participant observation; in contrast to participant observation, this requires that the researcher stays external to the actions of the informants rather than becoming actively involved in the process.

The degree of researcher participation can be seen as a scale ranging from complete participant to complete observer (Junker, 1960). The former has been heralded by some researchers as an ideal to which researchers should aspire (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), as it allows the researcher access to intricacies of the context only available to fully fledged members thereof. However, it also raises ethical issues of deception as it requires that the researcher does not disclose their primary purpose of membership; that is, to study the context at such depth as is usually unavailable to other forms of participant observation. Complete observation offers a similar level of anonymity, as it requires the study of a context without any researcher involvement therein, such as by observing through a window (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Lofland, 1973), or using video tapes (Caldwell & Atwal, 2005). However, forsaking participation altogether places restrictions on the level of observation and understanding that can feasibly be generated.

Brewer (2009) refers to these two extremes as ‘going native’ (complete participant) and being an ‘outsider’ (complete observation), and warns that each brings with it severely restricting limitations. ‘Going native’, Brewer argues, brings with it the risk of becoming so entrenched in the context that one forsakes one’s critical faculties; in contrast, remaining an outsider limits the amount of insight one can garner, thus placing limitations on the depth of understanding possible.

In practice, a level of participation that falls between these two is often preferable (and commonplace), and materials collection may shift continuously between increased participation and increased observation on behalf of the researcher (Brewer, 2009; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Brewer (2009) notes that the researcher’s existing role within the context (or lack thereof) necessarily changes the research process. Research requiring that the researcher assumed a new role within the context is referred to as participant observation; however, if the researcher is utilising an existing role they are instead engaging in observant participation.

While it is important to acknowledge which form of observation is undertaken (so as to avoid the pitfalls of ‘going native’ or remaining an outsider), classifying the entirety of the materials collection process as either participant observation or vice versa is problematic; particularly in studies utilising multiple locations. For this thesis, using Junker’s (1960) terminology, the researcher will partly act as a complete participant in the context – particularly in the conduction of auto-ethnographic aspects of materials collection, discussed in section 3.4.4 – and thus be fully immersed; and partly as a participant observer, as observations of and informal interviews with other participants will act as a primary source of materials. However, lending one of Brewer’s (2009: 61) definitions of observant participation as “use of an existing role to research an unfamiliar setting,” this will clearly form part of the research as well – in contexts where the researcher enters novel settings (unknown pubs) but cannot, and indeed following the tenets of ethnography *should* not (Brewer, 2009; Burgess, 1982), disassociate his own identity from the context under study.

Thus this thesis leaned towards the ‘comparative involvement’ side of Junker’s (1960) scale, with emphasis on subjectivity as opposed to objectivity, which is in line with the application of a reflexive standpoint in interpretation. In addition to allowing for the collection of materials and accessing understanding only available to fully-fledged members (through immersion), this approach allowed for the continuous movement between researcher roles, which aided in balancing the researcher’s influence on the materials collected (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). As such, while it is acknowledged that the research cannot be classified as either purely reliant on participant observation, observant participation, complete participation, or complete observation, acknowledging the ongoing shift between these roles throughout the study formed part of the researcher’s reflexivity.

3.4.3 Autoethnography and Researcher Introspection

The use of participant observation (or observant participation), which requires the researcher to be a part of the context of study, also allows for the researcher to treat themselves as informer; or to engage in what is variously (with some differences) known as introspection (Brewer, 2009), auto-observation (Adler & Adler, 1998), or autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2013). Autoethnography is an amalgamation of the inherent characteristics of autobiography (writing about one’s own past experiences), and ethnography (understanding cultural experiences) (Ellis et al., 2013).

Conducting autoethnographic research requires that the researcher not only *tell* their story – which would essentially be merely autobiographical – but use their tools and knowledge as a researcher to analyse them (Ellis et al., 2013). As with any ethnographic research, this requires a great deal of reflexivity so as not to ascribe generalised truth to a finding simply because it is based on the subjective interpretation of one's own experience. Further means of legitimising autoethnographic research includes contrasting one's own experience with those of other informants and drawing comparisons between these (Ellis et al., 2013).

Holbrook (1986) introduced researcher subjective introspection (RSI) – a puritan form of researcher introspection akin to autoethnography in other social sciences - to consumer behaviour in the form of an essay on being 'hip' growing up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The purpose of SPI is to draw on the researcher's consumption experiences to shed light on the process of consumption in everyday life, through writing and interpreting introspective autobiographical essays, which in essence makes it a form of self-reflecting participant observation (Brown & Reid, 1997; Holbrook, 2005). Indeed, Holbrook (1995) described it as the 'ultimate participant observation'. It can also be usefully combined with mechanical observation, i.e. photographs, to aid the researcher's recollection of particular settings, experiences or items (Holbrook, 2005); that is, self-referential autodiving (Belk, Sherry, & Wallendorf, 1988; Heisley & Levy, 1991).

Wallendorf & Brucks (1993) provide an overview of critiques leveraged against introspection, and RSI in particular. Amongst these is the issue of sampling, where the authors purport RSI as the ultimate form of 'convenience sampling' and argue that: "many of the consumption phenomena of interest to consumer researchers are experienced by a wide variety of other people ... simply being a consumer in a particular consumption situation does not appear to us to be sufficient justification for excluding data from all other consumers" (Wallendorf & Brucks, 1993: 348).

In response to this, Shankar (2001) argues that it is instead an extreme form of *purposive* sampling, which is the preferred method in interpretive research (see also Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Further, he argued that from an epistemological and ontological perspective – taking into account interpretivism's ontological stance of multiple realities and the inescapable subjective influence of social research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) – is interpretivism taken to its extreme: "if we ... accept as a basic belief or axiom the epistemological basis of research, then we should be able to embrace SPI [subjective

personal introspection] as a suitable method of collecting data in interpretative research” (Shankar, 2001: 32). Further, Gould (1995) argues that the major advantage of RSI lies in the researcher’s ability to access a depth of understanding into the subjects inner state, as it is impossible to know as much of another, external respondent as one does of oneself (see also Gould, 1991; Hixon & Swann, 1993; Shankar, 2001).

In relating this to the present study, which was based on the constructed and existential authenticity notion that authenticity is inherently personal (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999), Gould’s (1995: 720) argument that introspection provides access to “an understanding of consumption phenomena from an insider’s view” presents itself as highly beneficial. Gould (1995) further argues – again in contrast to Wallendorf & Brucks (1993) critique – that conscious introspection can uncover processual aspects of consumption thought. Through critical engagement with the phenomenon under study, the researcher can uncover patterns through engaging with sensations, imagination, behaviour and emotions. A fervent supporter of introspection, Gould (1995: 721) goes so far as to argue that “researcher introspection ... facilitates probably better than any other approach a direct, extensive focus on the rich and specific aspects of one consumer’s life.”

Thus researcher introspection, treated for the purposes of this thesis as synonymous with autoethnography, served as a means of gaining deeper insight into the consumer’s process of consuming authenticity. In order to ensure the trustworthiness of findings – and highlight the influence of the researcher’s subjective bias – materials collected through introspection were discussed with colleagues and supervisors (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Borman et al., 1986; Erickson, 1973; Gherardi & Turner, 1999) and contrasted to findings derived through interviews (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Ellis et al., 2013; Lofland, 1995; Marcus & Cushman, 1982), thus ensuring the “authenticity” of the materials in accurately representing that which is being depicted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.4.5 Photography

The use of photography, or mechanical observation (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994), in qualitative research allows the researcher to expand their understanding of social processes, as a photograph provides a visual recording of details that may otherwise go unnoticed or be forgotten (Harper, 2000). There are several ways to use photography, including:

- *Photo elicitation* (for an example of this in the study of authenticity, see Beverland & Farrelly, 2010) whereby the researcher presents their participants with a range of images to discuss. This allows the researcher to stimulate discussion on a given theme (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Harper, 2000). It also allows them to present several ‘natives’ with the same material, which add depth to the interpretation of a given phenomenon.
- *Autodriving* involves showing the informant images of themselves during a particular consumption process, and allowing them to reflect and comment upon what is happening in the image (Belk et al., 1988; Heisley & Levy, 1991).
- *Theory Building*, where photographs are used to concretise observations made while in the field, which helps the researcher continually (re)define their theories without losing sight of what led them to a particular conclusion (Harper, 2000). Thus images are useful in remembering events that may not have been recorded in detail elsewhere (i.e. in note or interview form), which is of particular value to researchers employing a hermeneutic approach as it allows them to revisit observations in light of new materials and theories. Alongside allowing the researcher to present the same materials to several participants, it allows them to share it with other researchers which adds to the depth of interpretation (cf. Belk et al., 1988).
- *Phenomenological Mode*, as termed and described by Harper (2000), is a way of using photography as a means of reflecting upon and interpreting one’s own experiences – which essentially renders it a companion of autoethnography or introspection (see section 3.4.3). Taking a photograph requires that one deliberately aims the camera at something that presumably is of particular interest at a given point in time (Harper, 2000), and as such it records information thought in the moment of consumption to be of value and worthy of interpretative consideration. Holbrook (1987; 1988) was an early proponent of this technique, a form of autoethnographic autodriving, in consumer behaviour.

While early concerns were raised regarding the intrusiveness of using visual recording equipment, arguments in favour of their use – quite apart from their ability to record particular phenomenon and elicit responses – have been made in the sense that they encourage participants to approach the researcher(s). Belk et al. (1988) found that the use of ‘mechanical recording equipment’ led participants to approach the researchers, which provided the opportunity to inform them about the research. Moreover, this led to some

observers offering to participate, which the authors argue help minimise sampling bias. However, as with any recording technique led by the researcher, it must be acknowledged that placing the camera in the hands of the researcher limits the materials collected to that which they consider relevant. While photography aids the documentation of phenomena considered of interest by the researcher, it may also increase researcher subjectivity in the materials collected. Researcher subjectivity, its impact, and ways to handle it is discussed in section 3.x and subsections thereof.

Achieving a sense of personal discipline as a researcher (Borman et al., 1986), and ensuring that one remains aware of personal biases throughout the process of collecting and analysing materials, requires that the researcher continuously reflects upon their collection of materials and their conclusions (Borman et al., 1986; Erickson, 1973). For the purposes of this thesis, photography was used as a means of aiding the recollection of *why* particular conclusions were drawn (Harper, 2000), thus serving as a means of minimising the issue of the difficulty associated with recollecting consumption experiences (Elliot & Jankel-Elliott, 2003). In addition, photography was used in the ‘photo elicitation’ sense, as a means of fuelling discussions with colleagues and mentors, which added depth to interpretation (Belk, 1988) and provided external confirmation on conclusions drawn (Gherardi & Turner, 1999).

3.5 Qualitative Research

The relevance of qualitative methods in social research is often attributed to the Chicago school and the work carried out there in the 1920s and 1930s (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999). What came out of the Chicago school of sociology was a reaction to what they considered to be “armchair sociology,” arguing instead in favour of “getting the seat of your pants dirty” (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999) – in essence, they argued for observing people and phenomena as they happened, in a natural context. Unlike the natural sciences, where the object of study can often be brought into a laboratory for study without this changing the outcome, proponents of the Chicago school argued that the natural context in which phenomena occur must be the sociologist’s laboratory (Bulmer, 1995). This bears considerable resemblance to ethnography, which as the core method of this study is treated in greater depth in sections 3.3-3-4, however conducting a qualitative study does not necessarily entail entering ‘the field’ *per se*. Qualitative studies can also utilise case studies, interviews (ranging from un- to structured), personal experience, introspection, or the study of history or artefacts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Arguably due to the historical dominance of the positivist paradigm in social sciences – certainly the case in business studies – definitions of qualitative research often implies that it is, in essence, any research that does not employ quantitative data (Bryman & Burgess, 1999). This somewhat simplistic definition is thus reductive in nature, seeing qualitative research as being simply *not quantitative*. However, as argued by Gherardi & Turner (1999: 107) “such simple oppositions as ‘numbers *versus* no numbers’ are inadequate for discussing and understanding the full complexity of the research process.” That is, to simply state that qualitative research is in essence that which quantitative research *is not* is a fallacy (Bryman & Burgess, 1999; Gherardi & Turner, 1999). The epistemological difference between numbers – i.e. traditionally quantitative data – as used in qualitative and quantitative studies is concerned with the outcomes sought. At a fundamental level, a quantitative study will traditionally take a positivist stance and employ numbers to dis-/prove a theory. However, numerical data can equally be used in the process of generating interpretive meaning (Gherardi & Turner, 1999). Reason & Rowen (1968) usefully summarise this as a distinction between seeking prediction (positivist use of numbers) and that seeking patterns (interpretive use of numbers); similarly, Glaser & Strauss (1967) draw a distinction between research concerned with verification on the one hand, and discovery on the other.

Qualitative research, then, is not *necessarily* different from quantitative ditto in terms of the data or materials collection methods used, instead the distinction is one of purpose. Guided not by concerns of rigour and reliability, as is its quantitative counterpart, qualitative data should instead be judged on its trustworthiness and, in the sense of accurately representing that which it seeks to depict, its authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A qualitative approach requires the researcher to construct a realistic account of the phenomena under study, which is continuously analysed for interactions, experiences, events, and meanings which lay the basis for a novel theoretical account (Gherardi & Turner, 1999). Through the continuous analysis of this theoretical account the researcher can then generate theories based on that which has been observed. Indeed, it is not uncommon for qualitative studies to be undertaken as a means of generating theories which are then tested quantitatively (for examples of this in the context of authenticity studies see Robinson & Clifford, 2012; Waller & Lea, 1998).

3.6 Methodological Approach

3.6.1 Section Introduction

As concluded in section 1.2.2, the literature review found a gap for research on authenticity that (1) explores the process of consuming authenticity from the consumer's perspective; and (2) moves away from the object-authentic based assumption that contemporary society has been drained of sources of meaning and self-identity (Arnould & Price, 2000). In short, "if the concept of authenticity is to have any legitimate place in discussions of culture, its definition must rest with those who "make up" that culture" (Taylor, 2001: 14).

The aim is thus *to explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers' process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences*. Following the epistemological presuppositions of a CCT-rooted approach – which allows for subjective, constructed and existential (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999), perceptions of authenticity – this necessitates an *in-situ* exploration of consumption behaviour so as to gain insight into consumer interaction, actions, intentions and perceptions; or authenticity as a part of the process of consumption *as it is being experienced* (Healy et al., 2007).

In essence, the stance was taken that this required an ethnographic approach, a basic supposition of which is that "culture/society is an integrated whole and [...] individuals can only be understood within the context of that whole" (Stewart, 1998: 6); meaning that ethnographies aim to understand a phenomena as a part of its context, which aligns epistemologically with CCT (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) and qualitative research more broadly (Bulmer, 1995; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999). Indeed, an ethnographic approach is particularly suitable as a means of gaining insight into subjective, idiosyncratic perceptions and actions of consumers (Elliot & Jankel-Elliott, 2003; Healy et al., 2007; Schwandt, 2000; Sherry, 1991). As such it allowed the researcher insight not only into *what* is happening in a context, but the meanings embedded in consumers' actions (Healy et al., 2007).

This study thus employed an ethnographic approach to the collection of materials, whereby the researcher gained a deeper holistic understanding of the phenomena under study through immersion into the context (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The following sub-sections outline the core rationale behind adopting an ethnographic approach; addresses its methodological weaknesses and how to counteract these; provides examples

of how ethnography has been used in consumer research; and outlines core materials collection methods associated with the approach.

3.6.2 Research Phases

Phase 1 – Site Selection: Extrinsic				
Sources of information	Methods	Areas of Interest	Objectives Met	
Identify object-authentic research sites through ethnographic observation of expert forum (CAMRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participant Observation• Informal follow-up interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumption habits and behaviour• Consumption constellations• Consumer characteristics• Mapping of actors• Interplay between objects and space of consumption• Consideration and definition of authenticity• Neighbourhood ‘roots’ of sites• Ownership of venue(s)• Site history	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide insight into <i>how</i> consumers perceive authenticity in a specific consumption context• Generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer’s overall perception of authenticity <p>Secondary objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informs selection of object-authentic research site(s)	
Phase 1 – Site Selection: Intrinsic				
Consideration of counter-case	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purposive sampling• Researcher auto-ethnography• Participant observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time of establishment• Ownership of venue(s)• Site history• Owner/manager intentions	<p>Secondary objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification of object-<i>ina</i>uthentic research site(s) as a counter-case	
Phase 2 – Main Study				
Material collection in line with research aim and objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participant observation• Auto-ethnography• Informal interviews• Theory building photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumption habits and behaviour• Consumption constellations• Interplay between objects and space of consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the benefits consumers derive from the process of consuming authenticity• Provide insight into how consumers perceive authenticity	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idiosyncratic consumption • Use of cultural capital • Observation of authenticating acts and authoritative performances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in a specific consumption context • Develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity • Generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer's overall perception of authenticity.
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3.7 Site Selection and Data Collection

3.7.1 Section Introduction

Having justified the philosophical underpinnings of an interpretivist ethnographic approach to consumer research and discussed the relative strengths and weaknesses of an ethnographic approach to the study of consumption behaviour, this section outlines how the discussed methods were used in the current research.

3.7.2 Material Collection Sites

There exists a wide array of approaches to selecting participants or settings for qualitative research. As such it is essential that the researcher can rationalise their method of selection by grounding their decision in the aim of their research (Creswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Ranging from maximum variation to convenience, to theory based or random sampling, each qualitative research approach lends itself more readily to certain sampling methods (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). However, a common approach is that “qualitative researchers employ ... purposive, not random, sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where ... the processes being studied are most likely to occur” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 202). For ethnographic studies, opportunistic (which involves following new leads as they emerge) and criteria (whereby the researcher sets a list of theoretically grounded criteria that should be met) sampling are both common

(Creswell, 1998). However, an equally valid approach is to ‘throw a wide net’ and approach a variety of potential settings and informants, with the researcher using their judgement to narrow the selection according to their suitability in answering research questions (Fetterman, 1989). Taking a purposive approach to the selection of settings, it has been suggested that the researcher ‘cases’ potential sites so as to assess their suitability in terms of providing insight into what is being researched (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). This entails collecting information about the site, whether through secondary sources, by making brief visits, interviewing people with knowledge of the setting, or some combination of these approaches (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

The relative suitability of various sampling techniques, then, varies depending on the aims of any particular research. The aims of this thesis was to “explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences”. As discussed in sections 2.3 through 2.8, there are three main theoretical conceptualisations of authenticity: object (strict and sincere), constructed, and existential (Wang, 1999). Table 3.1 summarises the basic parameters of each conceptualisation.

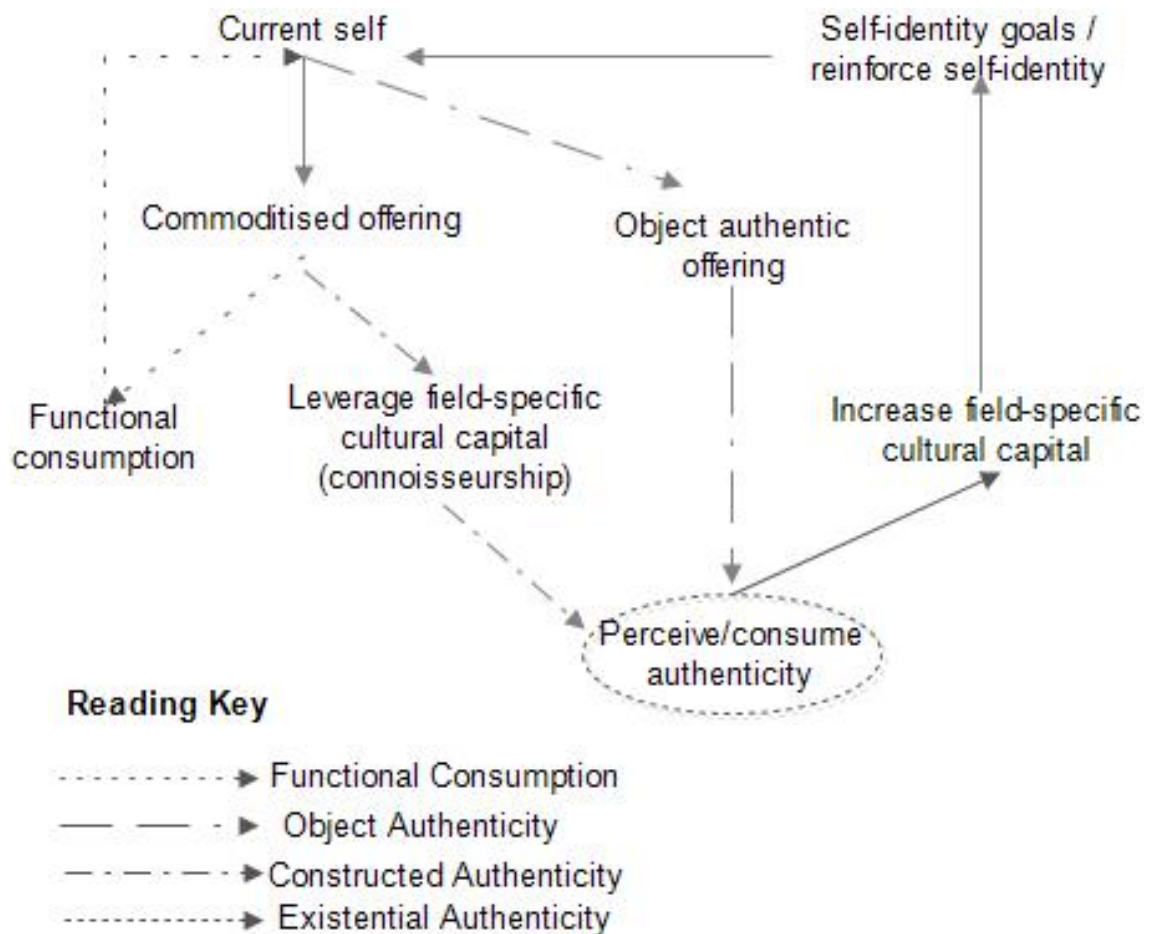
Table 3.1 – Basic Parameters of Core Conceptualisations of Authenticity

Authenticity Type	Strict Object Authenticity	Sincere Object Authenticity	Constructed Authenticity	Existential Authenticity
Focal Point	Toured Object	Toured Object	Toured Object	Activity, the Authentic Self
Key Determining Factor(s)	Originality, Uniqueness, Method of Production, 'Organicness', Unadulterated	Honesty, Motivations	Projection, Expectations, Emergence, Personal Interpretation and Definition	Consumer's internal feeling(s) of being true to themselves, or authentic
Symbolic			✓	
Emergent			✓	
Personal and Pluralistic			✓	✓
Negotiated		✓	✓	
Social			✓	✓

As theorised in section 2.11, the consumer’s process of consuming authenticity will vary depending on their reliance on object, constructed, or existential sources thereof. As such, for the purposes of this thesis, sites falling into one of two theoretically informed categorisations were selected – each of which represents one of the theorised consumption routes as visualised in figure 2.3-4 (reproduced below), i.e. either relying on object or constructed/existential sources of authenticity. The following subsections discuss how

each of these conceptualisations affects the selection of suitable settings for material collection.

Figure 2.3-4 – Conceptualisations of Authenticity in Consumption Process



3.7.3 Site Selection: Object Authenticity

Drawing on Section 2 of Chapter 2, it was established that unlike any of the other conceptualisations, strict object authenticity requires the involvement of experts in the authentication process (Trilling, 1972). That is, whether or not the consumer perceives an offering as being authentic is irrelevant; for something to be truly authentic, it must have been deemed as such by an expert in the area. Conversely, sincere object, constructed, and existential authenticity may draw from strict object authenticity, but at the core of their focus are the consumer's idiosyncratic perceptions (Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999).

In addition, proponents of object authenticity often take issue with mass proliferation and homogenisation (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]; Cohen, 1988; Prentice, 2001; Trilling, 1972). Zukin (2008; 2010), for instance, sees ubiquity and homogeneity as antithetical to authenticity. Moreover, Zukin (2010), amongst others (e.g. Beverland, 2006; Cornet, 1975; MacCannell, 1976), argues the importance of origins, roots and history to an

offering's claim to authenticity. Any site selected as representative of an object-authentic standard for the purposes of this thesis was thus required to meet three basic criteria found in the literature:

1. It must be deemed as authentic by experts;
2. It must be independently owned, i.e. not a part of a homogenising chain of venues;
and
3. It must have been established for a sufficient amount of time so as to have 'roots' in the local community.

As such, locating an object-authentic pub required a more stringent approach and the input of experts, whether through primary or secondary sources of information. In a study on authenticity in the luxury wine trade, Beverland (2006) selected 20 established, 'ultra-premium' wine producers. To determine what underpins their relative authenticity, Beverland proceeded to visit each of the wineries; conduct interviews with owners and/or managers; and tour the premises. This primary data was complemented with secondary data from trade magazines and books and other specialist sources of information, which allowed for the triangulation of emerging themes (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Unlike some of the beers sold in pubs – such as the predominantly Belgian *Trappist* style, governed by the International Trappist Association (Beverland et al., 2008) – there is no widely accepted mark of authenticity for pubs themselves. As such, other sources of expertise had to be located in the selection of an object-authentic pub. Founded in 1971, Camra (the campaign for real ale) is predominantly concerned with the continuation of the real ale tradition, however it also campaigns against the closure of traditional pubs and breweries (Spracklen, Laurencic, & Kenyon, 2013); indeed, Camra launched a campaign titled 'pubs matter' in 2014, with the aim of halting the steady conversion of pubs for other commercial uses (CAMRA, 2014). Furthermore, Camra awards the distinction of 'National Pub of the Year' to one establishment on an annual basis, with contenders judged based on the quality of their real ales; value for money; atmosphere; interior decoration; and customer service. While no Scottish pub has won the award, the Halfway House in Edinburgh won 'Scottish Pub of the Year' in 2009.

Drawing on Beverland's (2006) methodology, the first step taken in the selection of an object-authentic pub in Edinburgh was therefore a meeting with members of the local branch of Camra. This is based on the rationale that members of Camra, and organisation

explicitly involved in the quality of ale and drinking establishments, are likely to have a very high level of field-specific cultural capital, and subsequent connoisseurship. Informal, unstructured interviews were carried out with members, the results of which were recorded in note form and, where appropriate, audio recordings. The author attended three scheduled meetings with the local Edinburgh branch of Camra. The meetings were part of the regular routine of the group, and not specifically arranged for the purposes of this thesis – one was their annual meeting, in which they discuss the future of the group more generally and plan further events; the other two were ‘pub socials’. These are regular events wherein members arrange to meet at a specific pub, drink one or two beers, and move to another pub. Each pub social generally involves visiting 3 pubs over an evening, selected by a committee member and published on their website beforehand. These meetings take a very informal tone, and can be said to serve two purposes: they are a social event centred on the sampling of ales, and members are asked to review the selection and quality of beer, as well as the establishment as a whole, for Camra’s rankings. Neither of the events attended by the researcher was located in, nor centred around, the pubs that would later be selected for this study. However, attending these events allowed the researcher to gain insight – both tacitly and implicitly – into the multiplicity of considerations that the CAMRA experts take into account when judging the relative quality of a pub.

The information collected during these meetings was used to generate a list of pubs deemed to be authentic by local experts. The researcher made notes for each pub mentioned by a member of the group, which would typically include the name of the establishment, and a selection of key words that were used by the members during conversation. The list of pubs was then cross-referenced with reviews and listings in edited pub guides. Based on this, the most appropriate potential research sites were ‘cased’ by the researcher (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) through a single visit, and information was collected to ensure that potential sites met the three criteria of object authenticity that were derived from the literature. The findings at this stage informed the final selection of object-authentic research sites, and an overview of the three object-authentic pubs used for this study can be found in table 3.2.

Table 3.2 – Object Authentic Sites

Site Name	Collection Methods Used	Ownership	Year of Establishment	Deemed As Authentic by Experts
Bennets Bars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Photography 	Privately Owned	1839	✓
The Canny Man's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Secondary materials 	Family Owned	1871	✓
Abbotsford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Secondary materials 	Family Owned	1902	✓

3.7.4 Site Selection: Perceived Authenticity

Where object authenticity relies on the authenticating judgments of experts to deem whether something is or is not authentic, constructed and existential authenticity rely instead on the perceptions (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988) and feelings (Wang, 1999) of authenticity experienced by the consumer. As such, exploring consumers' process of consuming authenticity from a constructed or existential view point does not necessitate an object-authentic setting. Thus, in accordance with Belk and Costa (1998) and Grayson and Martinec's (2004) argument that consumers may accept as real a 'fabricated authenticity' of their own perception and imagination – and following Grayson and

Martinec's (2004) approach of selecting one object authentic and one inauthentic research setting – a sample of objectively *inauthentic* sites were also selected.

A natural starting point in this endeavour was to look towards postmodernist critiques of contemporary authenticity, foremost amongst which stands Boorstin's (1992 [1961]) 'hyperreality'. Boorstin (1992 [1961]: 3) begins by arguing that modern society has created a "thicket of unreality which stands between us and the facts of life", before moving on to argue that *inauthentic* offerings have grown to become the norm – to the extent where "we have become so accustomed to our illusions that we mistake them for reality. We demand them ... They are the world of our making: the world of the image" (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]: 5-6). MacCannell (1973: 1976) takes a similarly pessimistic view on the existence of authenticity in Western contexts, but where Boorstin argues that consumers crave increasingly spectacular inauthenticity, MacCannell's consumer seeks the authentic by going engaging in touristic activities, primarily abroad. Ultimately, however, MacCannell (1973: 1976) sees this 'quest for authenticity' as futile, as the majority of touristic experiences are staged and thus inauthentic.

However, this is based on object authentic logic (Lau, 2010), and places focus on the innate object (in)authenticity of the offering at hand, as opposed to the consumers' perceptions of authenticity and/or feelings of authenticity derived through its consumption (Cohen, 1988; Wang, 1999). As discussed in Section 3 of Chapter 2, this thesis seeks to gain insight into the process of consuming authenticity in a day-to-day context, and how consumers leverage cultural capital and its associated idiosyncratic knowledge within this process. That is, it seeks to move away from the assumption that contemporary society has been 'drained' of sources of meaning and self-identity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

To gain deeper insight into the process of consuming authenticity from an ostensibly inauthentic offering, additional research settings which do *not* derive authenticity from object authentic logic were therefore selected as a counter-case. In essence this could be any pub that does not have 'roots' in the community; does not have a long history; has not been authenticated by experts; and which may or may not be part of a larger chain. As such, where the selection of an object authentic site relied upon the authentication of experts, the selection of a secondary site – theoretically authenticated through the consumer's perceptions, feelings, and idiosyncratic consumption patterns (Bruner, 1994; Holt, 1998; Wang, 1999) – required a different approach. Thus the stringent approach to

site selection called for in the selection of an object authentic site was abandoned; instead, as is often preferred in interpretivist research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), a purposive selection of research site was employed. This allowed for the selection of a setting where the process under study – i.e. consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences – was most likely to occur (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Drawing on Shankar’s (2001) assertion that subjective personal introspection is an extreme form of interpretivism, which allows the researcher to access a depth of understanding of one’s subject unequalled by other forms of research (see also Gould, 1991, 1995; Shankar & Goulding, 2001), the selection of the second site utilised researcher introspection. The process of selection thus relied upon the researcher’s remembered experience of various potential sites, which were used to generate a list of potential venues. As with the object-authentic selection process, each of these were ‘cased’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983), a process which in this instance involves researcher introspection, whereby the researcher considered his perceptions of the site’s authenticity (Bruner, 1994; Cohen, 1988; Grayson & Martinec, 2004) as well as his own feelings of authenticity as brought about by the consumption process self (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Wang, 1999). In addition, notes were made on the existence of object inauthentic elements, such as faked artefacts or deliberately exposed brickwork, that created a ‘staged’ or ‘fabricated’ authenticity (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]; Brown & Patterson, 2000; MacCannell, 1976; Munoz, Wood, & Solomon, 2006a). These notations were also supplemented with photographs, in an effort to avoid losing sight of why particular conclusions were drawn upon continued reflection (Harper, 2000).

In order to achieve a sense of ‘disciplined subjectivity’ (Erickson, 1973) and gain external insight into the materials collected as well as highlight researcher biases (Arnould & Wallendorf, 1994; Borman et al., 1986; Gherardi & Turner, 1999), the materials collected and the subsequent selection of the second research site were discussed with mentors and colleagues. During this process, photographs were utilised by the researcher both for the purpose of stimulating the researcher’s memory (Harper, 2000) and as a means of stimulating discussion (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Table 3.3 presents an overview of the object inauthentic sites used in this thesis.

Table 3.3– Object Inauthentic Sites

Site Name	Collection Methods Used	Ownership	Year of Establishment	Deemed as Authentic by Experts
The Hanging Bat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Photography 	Chain	2012	
The Standing Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Secondary materials 	National Chain	1997	
The Booking Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introspection • Autoethnography • Informal interview • Secondary materials 	National Chain	2016	

3.7.5 Data Collection

The data collection methods employed for this thesis are outlined and examined in the preceding sections of this chapter. As noted in section 3.7.1, the author adopted an ethnographic approach to data collection with autoethnographic elements. The methodological implications of this are discussed throughout chapter three, and the specific methods discussed throughout the chapter reflects those that were employed for this thesis. The aim of this section is to give a brief and practical insight into how this manifested itself.

Beyond data collected through interactions with people considered ‘experts’ in the specific consumption context, the selection and resultant data collection from which was discussed in section 3.7.3, this study draws on two additional groups of participants. The first is the researcher himself; I frequented each of the above venues when the opportunity to do so arose, over a period of circa 12 months. These visits could be divided into two broad categories – visits that were explicitly for the purpose of collecting data, taking notes, and observing fellow consumers; and visits that arose from a personal urge to visit a pub, for whatever underlying reason may have caused this inclination. In both instances, I recorded both my own consumption and thoughts, as well as the actions and environment which surrounded me. This took the form of note taking (both pen and paper and using a laptop), photography, and occasionally the recording of brief audio snippets.

Additional data was conducted through informal interviews. Participants were selected in accordance with the interpretivist logic of inviting participants based on their likelihood of generating interesting results, or purposive sampling (cf. Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shankar, 2001). Specifically, I drew on my friendship group to identify participants for the study – this allowed me to specifically include people who I know to visit pubs not only for social gatherings, but as a means of relatively routine consumption, which would in turn help generate data which relates to the consumption of authenticity for identity purposes that go beyond social interactions.

Data was collected in several ways during the informal interviews, and not all interviews utilised the same collection methods. Audio was recorded and transcribed on several occasions, but this was not always possible as some events were not planned in advance. The researcher also took extensive notes, using both pen and paper and laptop. Several photographs were also taken as a result of the participants noting a particular feature in the pub.

The data was continuously analysed throughout the collection period, and indeed during the time of consumption. For autoethnographic elements of this thesis in particular, it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between myself as *consumer* and as *researcher* – thoughts and consumption practices that relate to the research would naturally lead to further critical self-reflection in the moment of consumption. This can be seen as a strength of autoethnography if viewed through the lens of Taylor’s (2001) argument that authenticity in culture must be seen through the lens of those who make up said culture. As additional data were collected, both through autoethnography and interviews, the

researcher continuously transcribed, read, annotated, and coded this data in accordance with the literature and emergent themes. The results of this endeavour are presented in chapter 4.

3.8 Chapter Conclusion

This section has detailed how appropriate research settings were selected for this study. In doing so, it has drawn on the findings from the literature review by linking the selection process to the three main conceptualisations of authenticity. It was argued that research settings adhering to two distinct set of criteria were needed in order to reflect: (1) the consumption of an objectively authentic experience – authenticated by a panel of experts as opposed to the consumer (Trilling, 1972) and which has heritage and roots in the community (Zukin, 2010); and (2) constructed (Cohen, 1988) and existential (Wang, 1999) sources of authenticity, which for the sake of minimising obfuscation requires a setting which is *not* objectively authentic. This ensures that each of the available sources of authenticity in figure 2.3-4 are represented in the research settings selected. The proposed selection method is also in line with the overall interpretivist, ethnographic method employed in the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Chapter Introduction

The findings presented in this chapter are not an exhaustive representation of the data collected; rather, they are a representation of what the author believes to be the key findings across the “data” or “materials” collected.

The first section essentially builds on sections 3.7.3-4, insofar as it details how evidence from the field was used in the selection of each site for this thesis. Each pub is afforded its own sub-section, which provides an explicit justification for its inclusion in this study – drawing on the data that was collected both through interviews with experts, introspection, observation, and secondary sources of information on each site. The selection of appropriate sites formed the first phase of this thesis, and serves as the foundation for the second phase which explores the consumption of authenticity within these sites. Following this, the findings have been arranged into sections that encompass key themes that emerged from the data. In essence, section 4.3 presents and discusses data related to the notion of authenticity as ideal self; section 4.4 examines findings that deals with the issue of authenticity and failing to meet consumers’ expectations; section 4.5 looks at the role of fellow consumers and inclusion; and section 4.6 presents findings related to cultural capital and perceptions of authenticity.

4.2 Authenticity of the Sites: Evidence from the Field

4.2.1 - Bennets Bar

Established in 1839, Bennets Bar has what CAMRA’s (2007: 41) guide to ‘true heritage’ pubs of Scotland refers to as “Edinburgh’s second finest interior after the Café Royal”, which according to the guide has remained essentially unchanged since 1906. This latter point was also raised by a CAMRA member at a meeting attended by the researcher. Its interior has been noted as being of national historic importance by CAMRA, whose guide to pubs of historical interest in Scotland summarises the interior as follows:

“The ornate gantry has niches, pilasters and scallop shell pediments. The original bar counter retains a former spittoon trough made of marble, which runs all along the front, and the bar top has two working brass water taps [...] The magnificent interior features and extraordinary four-bay mirrored arcading all the way down the right-hand side,

with hand-painted pictorial tiles with allegorical figures by William B Simpson & Sons of London.” (CAMRA, 2007: 41)

Between its year of establishment and the considerable number of original features, Bennets clearly matches two of the criteria set for an objectively authentic pub. However, it is part of a small chain of [privately owned] pubs, and has not remained in traditional ownership, meaning it does not quite meet the third criteria. It is worth noting that a less strict view of object authenticity would not take ownership into account – at least so long as the owners and management remain *sincere* in the sense that they aim to retain authentic aspects of the pub (Cornet, 1975; Beverland et al., 2008) – and one could thus argue that it meets all three object-authentic criteria if sincere object authenticity is taken into account. Indeed, as can be seen from the above description, no attempts have been made to homogenise the pub nor remove any of its original features.



Photograph 1: Bennets Bar Interior

4.2.2 The Canny Man's

Established by James Kerr in 1871, the Canny Man – officially The Volunteer Arms – has been run by the Kerr family since. Its interior has been noted as being of regional historic importance by CAMRA. Famous for its quirky interior and strict rules (a brass sign by the front door forbids camera, credit cards, mobile phones, and backpackers), CAMRA provides the following description:

“Famous multi-roomed pub with walls obscured from skirting board to ceiling with a vast collection of memorabilia accumulated over the years that impart a unique atmosphere. Visitors should carefully note the sign ‘Dress casual but smart’ on entering via the door in Canaan Street [...] The main bar at the front of the building has an old bar counter and back gantry. [...] This quirky pub sells its own blended whisky and over 200 single malt whiskies; it even has a champagne menu. When not busy, drinks are occasionally served on a tray with some complimentary peanuts – the prices reflect this.” (CAMRA, 2007: 44)

The author has visited this pub on many occasions, and a minor correction in this description is called for – a complimentary bowl of peanuts, crisps, or popcorn is always (not occasionally) offered with a drinks order, though one does occasionally have to ask the staff as they may forget to offer when busy. This was confirmed by the author through an informal conversation with a current bar manager. Moreover, a complementary finger-food buffet is served Monday through Thursday between 3pm and 6pm, and occasionally on a Friday. This tends to consist of food such as mini pizzas, sandwiches (salmon, tuna, cucumber and cream cheese), and oven roast potato wedges with cheese. This may seem less relevant than other aspects noted above, but links back to section 1.3 and the role of the pub landlord as ‘host’, and in turn to their sincere object authenticity in this role – a notion which will be discussed further in the findings chapter. Interestingly, it also provides a point of contradiction with academic literature on the traditional pub. As discussed in section 1.3, a majority of academic literature in this area suggest that the provision of food is not consistent with the traditional pub (cf. Clarke, 1998; Pratten, 2003; Maye et al., 2005). Indeed, beyond the complimentary snacks and buffet offered by Canny Man, they also dedicate a small part of the pub specifically for dining customers, and offer an elaborate food menu consisting of fully 138 menu items.

In terms of its inclusion in this study, the Canny Man is the second oldest pub in which data was collected, was mentioned by several members of CAMRA as a particularly salient example of an authentic pub, and local institution. As noted previously, it also remains owned and managed by the same family who founded it. Indeed, an informal conversation with the above-mentioned bar manager – who is not of the Kerr family, nor male - suggested that the current owner of the pub was concerned for its future once he passes, as for the first time in four generations there are no male heirs. It is thus the pub that most irrefutably meets all three criteria postulated for an object-authentic pub.

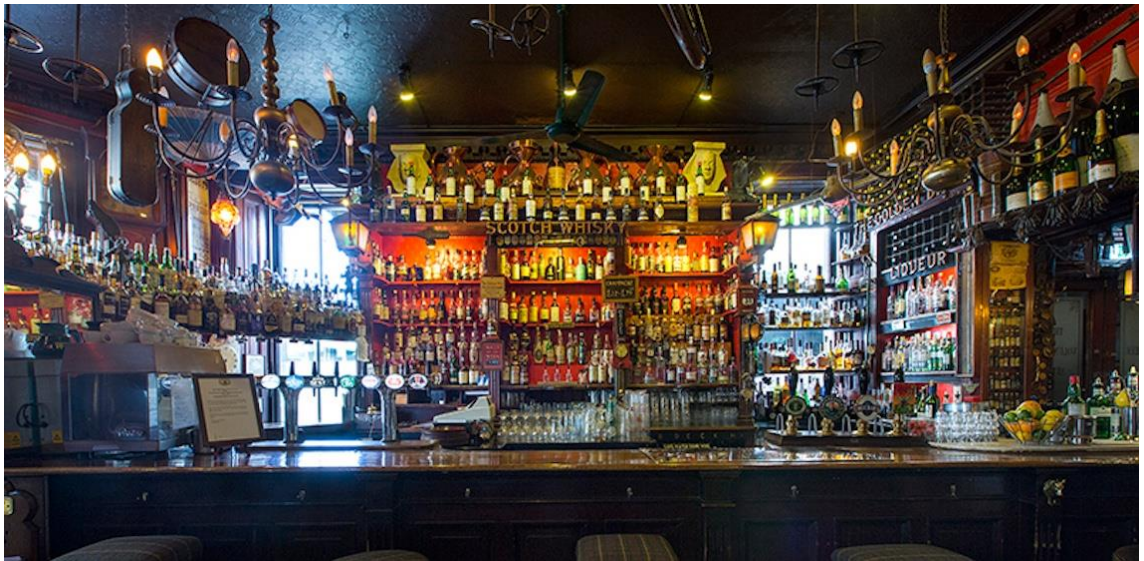
Since no photography is allowed in the pub, the photos used for the purposes of visual representation in this study are taken from the pub's website (Canny Man, 2016). This presents a slight weakness in the data collection at this venue, given that the researcher was not able to utilise photography in the phenomenological sense. As outlined by Holbrook (1987; 1989) and Harper (2000), this requires that photographs are taken as deliberate representations of an object or event that is of interest *at a point in time*. However, the photographs can still be used as a means of aiding recollection of *why* particular conclusions were drawn in the writing of autoethnographic notes, and to aid memory of the consumption experience more generally (Borman et al., 1986).

Moreover, a secondary source of information informing this study is found in *The Man's Fax*, a factsheet about the Canny put together by a long-standing regular customer, previously distributed at every table but still available at the bar and online. This document provides insight into the history and running of the pub, but also the many rules (whether explicit or implicit) and values held by the management. An interesting point to note here is that the sheet makes it explicitly clear that not everyone is welcome, only those who Mr Kerr would welcome into his own home (Fax, 2004). An interesting point to note in terms of the Canny's inclusion in this study is that the *Fax* implicitly deals with the struggle to remain objectively authentic:

"The Canny Man is not the best pub in the world; actually I know it's not. The fact that we can sit here and say it is the best and defend it against the rapid progress of Irish Bars and other designed pubs, is only one more reason why I think it is worth keeping until people can understand it. Most things here tell a story. The walls were not always admired as works of art. Many years have been very lean for the Kerr family with ignorant people trying to make The Canny Man conform and become same as all others. [...] Strangely enough, it appears others are now trying to copy the old shop [...] But a few old books don't really mean much, unless they bear witness to the past and stand history. The difference is, here they do. The ledgers and diaries in this shop go back to November 1893 and have all been kept." (Fax, 2004: 6)

It is interesting to note that this short quote alludes to both *sincere* and *strict* object authenticity. The long history and originality of the items and documents held within the bar can and has been confirmed, providing *strict* object authenticity (cf. Arnould & Price, 2000; Cohen & Cohen, 2012); the fact that only such items as bear meaning to the owners,

management, and patrons are kept and displayed provides a source of *sincere* object authenticity (Cornet, 1975).



Photograph 2: Canny Man Bar Interior.

4.2.3 Abbotsford

According to CAMRA's (2007) guide to the Heritage Pubs of Scotland, Abbotsford was originally owned by Jenner's, a large department store in the centre of town, located just across from the pub itself. The pub is believed to have been built by James Jenner, founder of the department store, so that his staff "could spend their wages in his own establishment" (CAMRA, 2007: 38). Today the pub is owned by DM Stewart Ltd, a fourth-generation family business that owns and operates four pubs in the city (DM Stewart, 2016). CAMRA (2007) provides a summary of the pub and its interior as follows:

"One of the finest examples of an island-style pub built in 1902 [sic] and barely altered since [...] Unlike the majority of pubs in this style, the Abbotsford has no island gantry. Instead, there is a carved mahogany structure with a balustrade around the top perched on the bar counter, similar to a modern day 'pot shelf' [...] Designed by one of Edinburgh's most prolific pub architects, Peter Lyle Henderson, it is a red sandstone ashlar building with a corner turret. In the far left corner is the original snack counter, an unusual survivor still in use for ordering meals at lunchtime." (CAMRA 2007: 38-

39)

As part of a family owned and local collection of pubs (the others being *The Guildford Arms*, *The Cumberland*, and *The Canons' Gait*), each with a distinct style, and having

been established over 110 years ago, the Abbotsford is the second pub in the sample to fulfil all three object authenticity criteria as outlined in section 3.7.3, alongside the Canny Man. Its interior is rated as being of national historic importance by CAMRA. It is also interesting to note that *The Cumberland*, sister pub of Abbotsford, is also mentioned in the CAMRA guide to Scottish heritage pub, but in the category of pubs that have been renovated in traditional style and which should “stand the test of time” (CAMRA, 2007: 88). A second sister pub, *Guildford Arms*, has not been warranted its own entry, but is noted for its “very elaborate Jacobean painted ceiling with spectacular cornices and friezes, a fine example of Victorian Rococo” (CAMRA, 2007: 43) – though it is noted that these features “only” date back to 1970.



Photograph 3: The Abbotsford. Source: Abbotsford (2016)

4.2.4 The Hanging Bat

Founded in 2012 and owned by The Hanging Bat Brew Co – an Edinburgh-based, small-scale brewery located within the bar itself – the bar boasts 6 cask and 14 keg lines, in addition to 120 bottles and cans (The Hanging Bat, 2016). Interestingly, the Hanging Bat is the only objectively in-authentic pub in this study that some of the CAMRA-members I interviewed reported frequenting. Their general stance is well summarised by this quote, by a fifteen-year CAMRA member:

“It’s a good place. I live in south Edinburgh, usually I will go to Bennets or Cloisters bar which is around the corner there. I don’t much like going to the Bat when it’s busy, not in the evenings, I don’t feel I really fit with that young “hip” crowd, you know. I’m not big on the design they have either. But the selection of beer is good, really, and I do like that they have quite a few casks still. The glasses are a joke though - I like a proper pint!” (Interview notes, July 2014)

The lack of pints, as noted in the above quote, is something that the Hanging Bat prides itself on. Indeed, they claim to be “the first bar in the UK not to offer pints” (The Hanging Bat, 2016), instead serving their beers in schooners (425ml, or two-thirds of a pint) or third of a pint-glasses, depending on alcohol content. They are “dedicated to the very best of UK beer”, source all of their food locally, and recruit all of their brewers from the brewing and distilling course at local Heriot-Watt University (The Hanging Bat, 2016). Throughout the descriptions of their business offered on their website, it is clear that a lot of emphasis is placed on highlighting their connection to a local community of suppliers, and employing locally trained brewers to produce their own beers. While strictly object in-authentic, this provides a clear link to sincere object authenticity and the findings reported by Beverland et al. (2008), as discussed in more detail in section 2.4.

This creates an interesting dichotomy in terms of the object authenticity of their offerings. In a historical context, the emphasis on locally produced beer and food – arguably hyper-local insofar as they produce some of their own beer on site – is a signifier of a ‘traditional’ pub, in line with how pubs operated prior to the homogenisation phase and formation of large chains that signified the 1980s and 1990s (Clarke et al., 1998; Pratten, 2003). However, while emphasising the local, their offering is arguably far from the traditional in its execution, with high ABV beers being the norm; experimental beer styles including chili-infused stouts; and food that is “all [...] cooked using our smoker. The hot dogs, ribs, wings, even the burnt beans” (The Hanging Bat, 2016). Indeed, the execution of their offering is more in line with the objectively inauthentic, ‘modernised’ pub as outlined by, for instance, Pratten (2003) and Maye et al. (2005), and in section 1.3.



Photograph 4: The Hanging Bat Bar Interior

4.2.5 The Standing Order and The Booking Office

The above two pubs will be presented together as both belong to the same national pub chain – J.D. Wetherspoon. Founded in north London in 1979, Wetherspoon opened its 100th pub in 1994 (J.D. Wetherspoon, 2016). By 2001 the chain operated 580 pubs and reached annual sales of £480m (Jones, Shears, Hillier, & Clarke-Hill, 2002), growing to 951 pubs and a turnover of £1.5bn by 2015 – making it one of the UK’s leading pub operators (Mintel, 2016). Wetherspoon is known for operating out of usually quite large venues, including former cinemas and banks; being a music-free environment; and aims to sell a good range of real ale and “quality food” at lower prices than their competition (Jones et al., 2002).

Two Wetherspoon pubs are included in this study – The Standing Order and The Booking Office. First opened in 1997, The Standing Order is situated in a former bank on the otherwise quite up-market George Street in central Edinburgh. It has enough pumps to serve 18 cask ales at any given time, though the actual number will typically be around 12, as well as 30 keg beers – however the actual number will again typically be lower, as the same beer will be routed to different lines.

It should also be noted that *The Standing Order* is the only object-inauthentic pub to be mentioned by CAMRA (2007: 89) as a potential heritage pub of the future: “What was once the Edinburgh branch of Glasgow-based Union Bank has now been colonised by Whetherspoons and forms one of their most imposing city centre outlets. The top-lit rectangular banking hall forms the main bar, and the subsidiary offices provide a series of smaller spaces. Note the mighty safe. The building dates from 1877-8.” As discussed briefly in section 1.3, this suggests that CAMRA, as expert of object-authenticity in the context of British pubs, are open to accepting into the ranks of authenticity pubs owned, managed, and indeed created by a national chain – which is in stark contrast to the tenets of strict object authenticity as outlined in sections 2.4, 2.10, and 1.2.1.



Photographs 5 & 6: The Standing Order

The Booking Office, meanwhile, was opened in 2016 and is situated in what was the original booking office for Waverley train station, built in the 1890s (J.D. Wetherspoon, 2016). Both of these pubs thus fail to meet any of the criteria for an object-authentic pub, as neither is independently owned, has a particularly long history, nor was deemed as authentic by the experts at CAMRA Edinburgh. Interestingly, however, both are located in buildings which offer their own object-authentic qualities due to their age and original purpose – and it is worth noting, briefly, that several members of CAMRA Edinburgh did ‘confess’ (their statements would typically sound burdened by a modicum of guilt) to occasionally visiting *The Standing Order* in particular. The typical justification given for this was their wide selection of cask ales, and highly competitive prices.



Photograph 7: The Booking Office

4.3 Authenticity as Ideal Self

Authenticity, as can be seen from the literature reviewed in this study, is often underpinned by a notion of the “self” – this is discussed in further detail in chapter 2, and general position is that consumers will often consume authenticity as a means of meeting identity goals, or establish a sense of meaning in their life. The findings of this thesis do support this general stance. The following excerpt from my field notes forms part of the autoethnographic element of this study, and was written as a stream of consciousness. These particular notes were taken during an unplanned visit to The Hanging Bat. Early in the notes I describe the table at which I sit:

“Seeing as I come here fairly frequently I have a favourite table. It is situated downstairs, tucked into a private-ish nook right under the stairs leading to the mezzanine floor above. The table is a simple, round, wooden affair - it doesn’t look new, but not particularly old either, with a pattern etched in the centre and around the outside. The chair, however, is a large part of the reason – along with the perceived privacy – of why this is my favourite spot. It is an old-looking leather wingback chair – I can’t recall if it was in new condition when the bar opened a few years ago, and it might have been, but as of the moment it is perfectly worn, just on the worn side of a dichotomy between new and worn beyond usefulness. On the other side of the small area – which leads on to a larger, but still quite small area housing eight wooden tables, stools, and benches – is a leather sofa and armchair of similar design, and in a similar state of wear.”



Photograph 8: Hanging Bat Corner Table

This is represented in the quote on several levels – the emphasis placed on privacy, for instance, alludes to a sense of being allowed to be oneself; the importance placed on the chair being ‘just so’ resonates not only with an imagined future self, but draws on strong ideas of nostalgia to support the perceived authenticity of this self-image. Indeed, this is further supported by the following quote from further into my notes, which goes some way towards explaining the importance of specific environmental cues in this specific consumption context:

“When I picture my dream home I always start with the study – a room where the walls are covered floor to ceiling by heavy oak bookshelves, filled fit to burst with books. In the centre of the room, atop a Persian rug, stands a lone wingback chair, and on either side of it an antique bar globe and a small wooden coffee table.”

This suggests that one reason for my frequenting this particular pub is that it resonates with an ideal future self, and it does seem to align with Wang’s (1999) conceptualisation of existential authenticity as a means of self-making and being true to oneself, and seeking out consumption experiences that conform to one’s identity. It is also interesting to note that both the environment in the pub and my imagined future home draw on a sense of down to earth nostalgia, which might suggest that one means of extracting authenticity from an objectively inauthentic environment is to frequent places that in some way support an ideal self, and align with a particular fantasy of the self. In a related vein, the following excerpt from an interview in Canny Man captures how other customers can impact perceptions of environment and link to an ideal future self:

“I guess it’s.. I used to find it intimidating here, everyone was so much older, they still are, and I guess I didn’t fit. But I still liked it. Now I can see myself as.. Not one of them yet, but I like the idea of being one of the people who have lived somewhere all their lives, come to the same pub every week, and you know everyone. I have never been that stable, I moved a lot, but [...] the idea of it, yeah, I like that.” (Interview, Maria, Canny Mans)

Maria has lived in Edinburgh, specifically in Morningside, where Canny Man is located, for four years, and was 32 at the time of our interview. Similar to how I linked my favourite spot in The Hanging Bat to a long-standing fantasy of an ideal self in an ideal home, Maria drew parallels between her own frequent visits to the Canny Man and an ideal self with a more stable lifestyle than she has thus far enjoyed. Whether it is indeed true or not, she imagined the customers – who she perceived, accurately at the time, to be

considerably older than her – as long-time locals of the area. I questioned her a bit further on this:

“It’s hard to say, but it’s like I see them all as having houses, you know, proper Morningside people. Big house, old car, champagne at Canny Man. I bet they know all of their neighbours as well, and the local butcher and cheesemonger. You don’t get to know your neighbours when you move around every few years, live in rented flats, and I can’t see that changing for me any time soon. The idea is appealing though, the fantasy of it.” (Interview, Maria, Canny Mans)

What is interesting about this is that, to Maria, it’s not just the pub itself that links to an ideal future self as someone who is more settled in life, it’s her fellow customers. This again links to existential authenticity, as this acknowledges that authenticity can be interpersonal and affected by other people. Her reasoning also shows the importance of fantasy, and similarly to myself she appears to take a quite active role in linking the experience and environment that she is consuming to some aspect of an ideal future version of herself, and her life.

4.4 Authenticity and Failing to Meet Expectations

While the informal interviews carried out for this thesis were limited to one occasion per interviewee, the author continuously visited the data collection sites throughout the collection period. In addition, the author was intimately familiar with several of the sites (Canny Man, Bennets, Hanging Bat, The Standing Order) prior to commencing the study. This led to a somewhat unexpected observation, recorded in Bennets:

“I am in Bennets today to meet [my colleague] Rebecca for a catch-up and a quick bite to eat before going to the cinema. I arrived early, as I usually do, and ordered a pint of Jarl – cask, not keg [both were available]. Something feels very different in here today, and it has taken me a while to put my finger on what it is. I have already written Rebecca to change venues for our meet-up, so this will be brief. The main thing I noticed are (1) I have never seen this barman in here before, and he looks out of place – long greasy hair, tired (hangover?), and huge stain (tomato soup?) all down the front of his shirt; (2) There is music playing! I can’t recall ever hearing music in here before, and certainly not the fairly ‘hard’ rock that is currently coming out of the speakers; (3) There aren’t many other customers in here, but one group stood by the bar look nothing at all like the clientele I would expect to find in here. To my mind, Bennets is largely frequented by older customers who, for a lack of better words, come across as rather

comfortably middleclass. This group, however, don't fit that mould. In fact, they look more like the people you will generally see standing outside The Kings Arms, slightly further down Tollcross – one out of only two pubs in the area I haven't been to, precisely because the clientele doesn't look particularly welcoming; (4) It smells of bleach – or more accurately "Toilet Duck" – the sort of scent you would expect in the bathroom, but not the bar itself."

One important thing to note here is that I have frequented Bennets, on average, two to three times a month over the last three years. It has served as a regular meeting spot for myself and fellow (at the time) postgraduate students. It is also somewhere I tend to take visitors. Indeed, my familiarity with the environment can perhaps be seen in the specificity of the noted – arriving early, as usual, as this is close to where I live, and a place I enjoy visiting; and the ordering of a Jarl which specifically has to be from cask, and not keg, as is my preference in this particular pub. As such, I have developed a set of deeply held expectations, at least three of which were clearly not lived up to in the above experience. Indeed, it is also interesting to note that while I cannot initially describe what is different, the finding of one cue that is incongruous with my expectations seems quickly to unravel a series of additional elements that affect my ability to enjoy the experience, and which rob it of its authenticity – the new *and* somewhat shabbily dressed barman is an initial concern, which in turn leads me to notice the music, and subsequently make judgments of the to me unknown set of fellow consumers in the bar. Despite the object authenticity available in this environment, it seems that the notion of authenticity in this consumption context is quite fragile, and dependent on my own perceptions more than external objective authenticity.

4.5 Fellow Consumers and Inclusion

As noted in section 4.3 fellow consumers in Canny Man were of great importance to Maria, as she felt connected to the lives she imagined they lead – she found their relative stability both enviable and aspirational. Similarly, the following quote from James, during an interview in the Standing Order, also highlights the importance of fellow consumers to his own experience:

"I usually go to smaller pubs, but I do like this sort of place as well. I feel like, it's inclusive, you know? I go to a lot of places because they have a great selection of gin, or because they have the right tonic, that sort of thing which is really a bit ridiculous. I like that, cool, hip, individual location places. But there is something inclusive and

comforting about chains like this, by design, like it's a different experience. It's calculated at a corporate level to make you feel included. I guess for a lot of people that's.. That's it, maybe you can't go to hip places, so it's this or some dirty pub on the outskirts of town. I think you feel more taken care of here than you would in a place like that. I like the sort of warmth, the mix of people that leads to." (Interview, James, Standing Order)

This quote raises a couple of interesting points. First, James acknowledges his own (at least self-perceived) relatively higher level of cultural capital than that of the average consumer in the Standing Order (again, at least according to his perception). He also notes that the selection of drinks – gins, tonics – is not up to his usual standards, which would imply that his ability to leverage his cultural capital as the basis for idiosyncratic consumption, which is linked to the ability to extract authenticity from the inauthentic, may be limited. One might expect this to make the experience less authentic – yet, James opts to focus instead on the social elements of the pub and its social atmosphere. As was noted in section 1.2.2, an “authentic” pub is often painted as a social meeting space for locals, and this appears to be what James draws on to extract a sense of authenticity here. He emphasises with his fellow consumers, and this resonates with a part of his own person which in turn leads him to find authenticity in the Standing Order. As such, while his sense of authenticity does rely on his own perceptions, he draws directly on the notion inclusion and on his fellow consumers in the process of “authenticating” the experience. This theme of inclusion, and the mix of people it leads to, is something that I too acknowledged during an earlier visit to the Booking Office. From my introspective notes:

“Another thing I quite like is the mix of people in here. I'm sitting in a corner, and in front of me I have two mid 30s (I estimate) Spanish men in t-shirt and jeans. Right next to them are two girls in their early twenties, one of whom has hair that is at least three different colours and sort of looks like a rainbow. The other looks like she would listen to a lot of Kings of Leon. To the other side of the Spanish chaps is a big family – and I mean big: three kids, two parents, two grandparents, and a third person around the same age as the grandparents. One table back, right behind the Spanish guys, is a man working on his computer – in fact, he looks a bit like a slightly older (40?) version of me. He is well dressed in a smart shirt and chinos, with nice brogues. Further back yet, behind him, is a couple who are easily in their 80s. The thing is, none of these people look out of place. Everyone looks like they belong in here, and the pub wouldn't seem any different if you walked in and it was all girls with rainbow hair, or all Spanish guys,

or all people like me, or all families, or all guys like me. Everyone just fits, everyone looks comfortable.”

The importance of inclusion, as highlighted both by myself, James, and Maria, links back to the very definition of a ‘pub’ or ‘public house’. Indeed, similarly to James I find myself, in the above quote, drawing some form of authenticity from the fact that a wide range of people are able to find comfort and a sense of belonging in the environment. Somewhat in contrast to James, however, I highlight that to me it is not the *people* who make the atmosphere, so much as the atmosphere of the pub itself that allows for the people to casually blend in. It is interesting, in this context, to highlight the difference in accessibility in terms of the social elements of the two object-inauthentic Wetherspoon pubs and the object-authentic Canny Man. In section 4.3, Maria placed emphasis on her perception of *other* customers’ experience, in stating:

“Now I can see myself as.. Not one of them yet, but I like the idea of being one of the people who have lived somewhere all their lives, come to the same pub every week, and you know everyone” (Interview, Maria, Canny Mans)

She also stated that she finds the idea of this sort of experience appealing. It is interesting to note that, despite her frequenting Canny, she is not yet “one of them.” Contrary to this, the experiences outlined by myself in The Booking Office and James in The Standing Order suggest a more immediate sense of inclusion. Another interesting observation on the role of fellow consumers is provided by Amy, in the Abbotsford:

“One thing about this specific pub that I enjoy – well, I enjoy it, but I also find it awkward – is how the tables are arranged. If you come at a busier time of day, you will often have to share a table with someone you don’t know, because of the length of the tables and how they are positioned along the outer wall. That isn’t something terribly unusual in a pub, of course, but there is something about this layout that makes it feel strangely personal, and it can feel intrusive to ask. It even feels like the people who come here are a bit like me – not the gregarious “I will talk to anyone” stereotype of a pub regular [...] I think a lot of us are more the type to sit on our own, or in pairs, so when that isn’t possible – I don’t know, it is almost like it feels perverse, but also quite familial.” (Interview, Amy, the Abbotsford)

Photograph 3 in chapter 3 shows the placement of tables in the Abbotsford, and may help put Amy’s comments into context. There are several aspects of this quote from Amy in

terms of giving insight into the role of consumers and the sense of inclusion in deriving authenticity from the consumption experience. Amy clearly identifies with her fellow consumers in some way, and in line with the quotes discussed above, she does draw on her own perceptions of who they are to form her own view of the experience at hand, by stating that they appear to be “like her,” and quite withdrawn. She also sees the pub itself as almost forcing her and her fellow consumers closer together, by leaving them no option but to sit together at fairly close proximity – an experience she finds both awkward and familial. To some extent, one might argue that Amy seems hesitant to engage with fellow consumers, but also enjoys the familial feeling that she is able to derive from it when it cannot be escaped. Indeed, her use of the words “familial” and description of other consumers as being “like her,” do suggest that Amy, too, finds fellow consumers to be of fundamental importance to the authenticity of her consumption experience.

4.6 Cultural Capital and Perceptions of Authenticity

A visit to the Canny Man with two respondents – Maria, and her partner Philipp - provides some initial evidence for this. On the general subject of what it is that they like about Canny in particular, both mentioned the décor. I asked them to expand on this:

“It just has such a unique character to it. I don’t know of any other pubs that look like this, with all the crazy stuff hanging off every wall and ceiling. I mean, like, I have been to other pubs that have a lot of tat in them, not as much, but it’s different. I don’t know how, but here it feels like, more natural, you know? It doesn’t feel forced. If you look around, there are odd things like that bungee jumping certificate. It says Kerr on it, so it’s not just something they bought to just hang here. It’s like a memory for the people who actually own the place, not just something they thought would look good”

(Interview, Maria, Canny Mans)

Philipp added a little to this, saying:

“What I think is interesting, and I guess this kind of what Maria is saying, is that so few of the things in here relate to pubs or alcohol. If you look at [Bow Bar], for example, they have gone for a similar style as well [...] but it’s all pub related. Like old mirrors with “Caledonian Brewery”-branding on them, that sort of thing. I mean, this old mannequin, or the brass instruments over there, even this table is an old sewing

machine. That has nothing to do with pubs, it's just stuff they have collected. It does feel like a collection put together over time, one thing at a time. In a lot of pubs, I think you can tell that they just went to a shop and bought all the decorations in bulk, with the express purpose of trying to create a specific atmosphere from day one.” (Interview, Philipp, Canny Mans)

In terms of the core conceptualisations of authenticity, this seems to suggest that - for Maria and Philipp, in an object-authentic setting – a lot of emphasis is placed on the *sincere* aspect of object authenticity. As outlined in section 2.4.2, in addition to the criteria of being considered as authentic by experts, object authenticity can stem from something being made for the “right” purpose. The quote from Maria, above, highlights the importance she places on her sense that a personal meaning is attached to the many items that create the unique atmosphere of Canny Man.

Similarly, Philipp stresses how the collection feels as though it was organically curated over time, suggesting an enduring passion for the creation of the atmosphere that lies at the centre of Canny Man’s offering. Further, both Maria and Philipp used other pubs that they had visited as a means of comparison, highlighting how Canny’s décor differs from other pubs they have visited. Philipp’s notion of being able to “tell” that some pubs buy their decors in bulk, which lowers sincere object authenticity, suggests that he is using his cultural capital to make a judgment.

These findings from Canny Man thus rely quite heavily on a relationship between field-specific cultural capital and *sincere* aspects of object authenticity. A similar theme emerges from my introspective data collected in the object-inauthentic *Hanging Bat*.

“The supposed lack of effort that has gone into making the environment visually appealing in the traditional marketing sense – with detailed consideration of colours, patterns, textures, congruity – of the sort that you would find in, say, a branch of Wetherspoons, seems forced. I can’t help but picture the owner/s or interior designer/s spending weeks, even months, finding the perfect wood for the bar panelling – it would have to be old and rugged, yet durable, and in pristine enough condition to be matching throughout. More important that it looks recycled than actually is, and I can’t but wonder whether the wood is indeed recycled, or if it was treated to look as though it were. [...] I know that it is a relatively new pub, opened in the last 5 years or so, and that the ramshackle aesthetic was a deliberate design choice seems obvious, given not

only the odd perfection with which the worn nature of the bar design has been executed”

In contrast with Maria and Philipp, my autoethnographic notes from the Hanging Bat thus suggest that I question the sincere object authenticity of the hanging bat. Interestingly, notes taken later during the same visit suggest a somewhat contradictory judgment:

“I like how beer is very much the focus of the whole bar. There’s a very small brewery in Edinburgh, at the old vet school, called Barney’s. I have been there for a “tour” (which necessitates very little touring) a couple of times. It basically has all the machinery for brewing beer crammed into an old garage, and that’s it. It’s all very basic, very unrefined, and the hanging bat has a similar aesthetic. While Barney’s aesthetic is out of necessity and that of the Hanging Bat feels more like a deliberate choice, it still feels honest. If I had the same beer in a wetherspoons or greene king pub, I don’t think I would like it as much. It feels more honest here, and I can’t help but think that whomever owns it has an actual love for beer, and providing good beer in a favourable environment. I feel like they made a bar where they themselves would like to go, much like Barney brews beer that he likes to drink.”

What is interesting to note here is that the latter judgment again seems to draw on cultural capital as a means of extracting authenticity. However, the experiences differ as Maria and Philipp seem able to extract an extant object authenticity. My experience in the Hanging Bat resonates with the position that consumers draw on field of consumption-specific cultural capital to *decommodify* mass-produced and mass-cultural offerings. It is clear, from the first quote, that I am not blind to the inauthenticities of the venue and the way in which it has been executed. My process of decommodifying relies heavily on aspects of ‘refinement’, and conforms with his notion that consumers’ emphasis on the “distinctiveness of consumption practices” and subjectively constructed connoisseurship. This is evident in part from my drawing on other experiences of small-scale, artisanal breweries such as Barnies, but also the following excerpt:

“The paraphernalia available facilitates, even encourages, the arguably rather more shallow aspects of my consumption – the smaller glasses, or ‘schooners’, for example, readily lend a sense of refinement. You don’t go here to have a pint of lager and watch football; you come here because you like good, interesting beers, made by people with a love for the craft. The combination of highly knowledgeable staff, ‘meet the brewer’-

events, and a selection of phenomenal beers from the likes of To Ol, Magic Rock, even the relatively less known Dugges, that's what brings me here."

This passage clearly alludes to the use of field of consumption-specific cultural capital as a means of decommodifying the offering at hand. Rather than focusing on the inauthentic aspects that one first encounters (the somewhat "forced" décor, for instance), my emphasis here is on aspects of the consumption experience where my cultural capital can be leveraged. This is supported by the juxtaposition of those who drink lager and watch football (which suggests lower overall cultural capital), and my own knowledge of artisanal breweries and appreciation for the sense of refinement.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Chapter Introduction

Where chapter 4 presented core findings in accordance with overarching themes found within the data, this chapter delves further into the findings and relates them back to the research objectives. The chapter is therefore structured in accordance with the objectives as outlined in section 1.2, as reproduced below:

- Develop a more holistic understanding of authenticity through synthesising different conceptualisations
- To generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer's overall perception of authenticity.
- To develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity
- Provide insight into *how* consumers perceive authenticity in a specific consumption context
- Identify the identity benefits consumers derive from the process of consuming authenticity

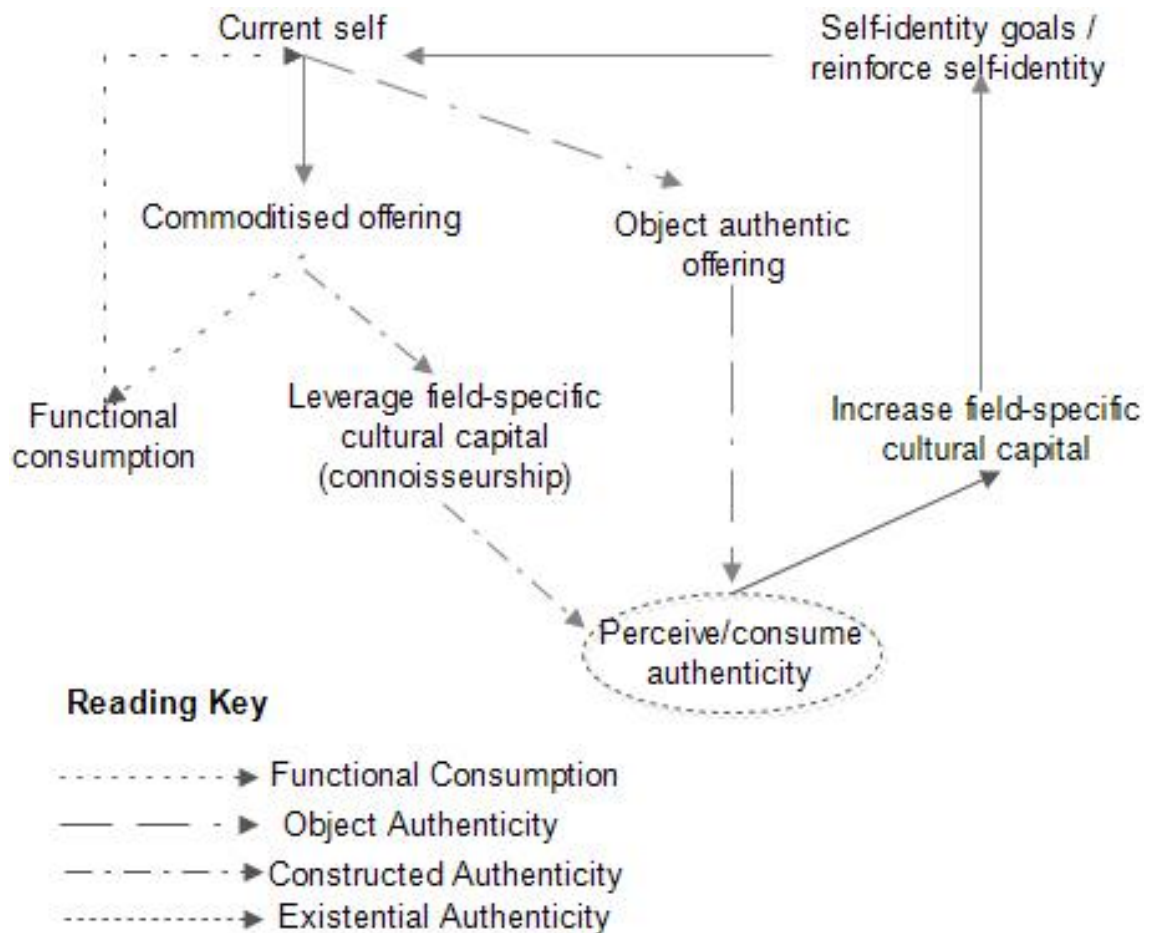
The first objective was met through a review of the literature, in chapter 2. This chapter discussed authenticity through the three core conceptualisations found in the literature – object, constructed, and existential. The critical review of each conceptualisation resulted in framework 2.3-4, which shows the role and interrelationship of each concept as suggested by past research. The second objective was partially met in the literature review through a discussion of the theoretical role of *field of consumption-specific cultural capital* (see section three of the literature review). An argument was put forward that the consumption of authenticity both relies on, and is spurred by, cultural capital, which in turn generates personal identity benefits. This is further developed in section 5.2. Sections 5.3-5.4 provide further insight into objectives three, four, and five, respectively.

5.2 Interrelationship Between Conceptualisations

The second objective of this study was to “*generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer's overall perception of authenticity.*” As noted in the introduction to this chapter, this objective was met as a part of the literature review, where

the links between different conceptualisations, as outlined in previous studies, were highlighted. This is represented in the theoretical framework, the final version of which was presented in figure 2.3-4 in section 2.17, reproduced below:

Figure 2.3-4 – Bourdieu and the Consumption of Authenticity



As can be seen from this framework, the core relationships between conceptualisations, as suggested by extant literature, is a link between *object* and *constructed*, and *existential* authenticity. This link between object-based (i.e. both object and constructed) conceptualisations and existential authenticity was first suggested by Leigh et al. (2006), who found that existential authenticity can be derived from object-authentic sources. A similar notion was put forward by Buchmann, Moore & Fisher (2010), who argue that existential authenticity hinges on whether objects encountered are deemed authentic by the individual (i.e. constructed-authentic), and this authenticity is negotiated in the process of consumption. As discussed in section 2.7, the relationship between different conceptualisations has been somewhat underexplored – only three studies were found to

explicitly explore any interrelationships (Leigh et al., 2006; Kolar and Zabkar, 2010; Buchmann et al., 2010).

One limitation in our understanding of the interrelationships between different conceptualisations, as highlighted in section 2.7, is the lack of consideration for how *existential* authenticity might inform its object-based counterparts. That is to say, while the literature acknowledges that existential authenticity can be informed by perceived object-based authenticity, the reverse of this relationship has not been explored. The findings of the current research suggest that this may be a fruitful avenue to pursue.

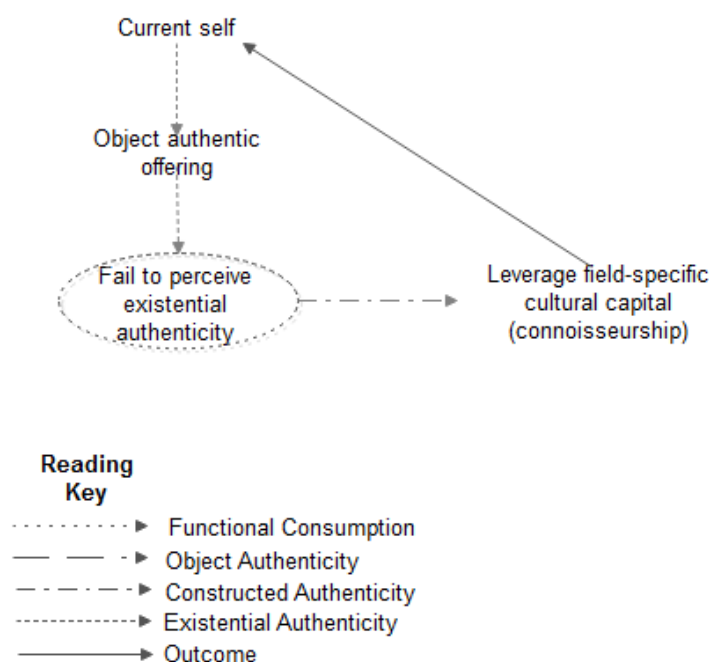
Section 4.4 discusses the impact of failing to meet expectations, which in turn leads to a negative consumption experience. As defined by Wang (1999: 359), existential authenticity “can often have nothing to do with whether toured objects are real,” relying instead on “non-rational factors (emotion, bodily feeling, and spontaneity, etc.) (ibid: 361). Wang also notes the ontological link between existential and constructed authenticity, as the latter can be explained by one’s expectations and stereotyped images of a toured object, which explains perceptions of authenticity (cf. Bruner, 1991). However, as discussed above, the general assumption is that it is *constructed* authenticity which affects its existential counterpart.

The findings of this thesis suggest a hitherto unexplored interrelation, where *existential* authenticity as perceived by the consumer leads to negative reinforcement of *constructed* aspects of the experience. This is evidenced in section 4.4, where the findings suggest that existential aspects of my consumption in Bennets had a negative impact on constructed aspects of the experience. What is interesting here is that the perceived lack of authenticity in this particular consumption experience started as an *emotion* – that is, it was rooted in existential authenticity (Wang, 1999). This, in turn, lead the author to consider *why* something felt different to usual, i.e. why the consumption experience failed to meet his expectations. Moreover, the decision to change venues was taken *prior* to exploring any constructed-authentic reasons underlying the perceived lack of authenticity in experience. As seen in section 4.6, the existentially-rooted perception of inauthenticity did lead the author to consider underlying causes, in constructed-authentic fashion. This goes against the findings of other literature which has explored the interrelationship between different conceptualisations of authenticity, which has only argued that object (Leigh et al., 2006; Kolar and Zabkar 2010), and constructed (Buchmann et al., 2010), can facilitate existential authenticity.

The argument could be put forward that the source of inauthenticity was still constructed, as the author was able to pinpoint his dissatisfaction with the experience on constructed grounds. However, this is something of an oversimplification of the process of consuming authenticity – the core issue at hand is not whether a certain conceptualisation can explain consumption practices, but how the conceptualisations inform each other. Extant literature, and by extension the framework developed throughout the literature review, suggests that constructed authenticity necessarily comes *before* existential authenticity. The above findings suggest that the framework should be extended through the inclusion of a new consumption route, whereby *existential* authenticity underlies *constructed* considerations of the experience. Moreover, it is worthwhile restating that Bennets is one of the pubs identified as *object authentic*; which means this existential perception of inauthenticity – and subsequent constructed-authentic deconstruction – negated any object-authentic benefits available in the context.

This suggests a new and previously unexplored relationship between the conceptualisations, at least in the context of an object-authentic site of consumption. Figure 5.1 provides a visual representation of this interrelationship.

Figure 5.1 – Proposed Relationship between Existential and Object-based Authenticity



The findings thus suggest that existential authenticity can act as a starting point for the consumption of authenticity within a given context; if *perceived* as existentially authentic, a consumer may then rationalise this perception through leveraging their field-specific cultural capital. From an object-authentic standpoint, the object being consumed remains equally authentic as previously, but from a consumption perspective it does not generate the identity benefits associated with consumption (cf. Beverley & Farrelly, 2010). It should be noted that this new route is based on exploratory data, and needs further empirical verification – however, if further proven, it may provide a better understanding of how the currently divergent conceptualisations of authenticity, often used in isolation (see section 2.7), inform one another. This, in turn, would lead to a better understanding of the consumption of authenticity from a consumer perspective.

5.3 The Role of Field of Consumption-specific Cultural Capital

The third objective of this study was to “develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity.” Section three of the literature review drew on Bourdieu’s (1984) fields of consumption and notion of cultural capital, as further interpreted and developed by Holt (1998) and Arsel & Thompson (2011). The argument was put forward each consumption site (pub, in this instance) should be viewed as a field of consumption, within which specific cultural capital is required (Arsel and Thompson, 2011) to *decommodify* the offering at hand (Holt 1998), thus allowing consumers to derive an authentic consumption experience. The review also acknowledges a slight variation in these authors’ definition and use of fields of consumption. Holt (1998) follows Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) in seeing fields of consumption as areas of competition and conflict, in which consumers compete to establish monopoly over a particular form of cultural capital. Arsel and Thompson (2011) acknowledge this aspect, but also view fields of consumption as less defined sub-cultures, with less emphasis on competition, and more on shared discourses and value systems.

Common across both views is the importance of amassing and utilising cultural capital for identity purposes (Holt, 1998; Arsel and Thompson, 2011). This essentially echoes Leigh et al. (2006), who argue that capital accrued within a sub-cultural setting is verified and leveraged for social standing through discourse within that subculture, which provides a source of authenticity. As detailed in section 3 of the literature review, cultural capital and the notion of fields of consumption are used in the theoretical framework developed in chapter one as a means of understanding two things: (1) *how* consumers derive authenticity from object-inauthentic pubs; and (2) how identity benefits are derived

from the consumption of authenticity. In accordance with the above authors, it was posited that cultural capital can be leveraged to decommodify an inauthentic offering through connoisseurship (Holt, 1998), and that increasing cultural capital (through consumption) holds identity benefits (Arsel and Thompson, 2011).

This can be linked to constructed authenticity, which tends – to varying extents – to rely not only on the consumer themselves, but also others who facilitate or surround the consumption experience (Leigh et al., 2006). As discussed in section 4.4, fellow consumers and a sense of inclusion were found to be important in this thesis. Being surrounded by other consumers who are able to extract authenticity from an experience – or who fit with your idea of an authentic fellow consumer – is likely to have an impact on your own perceptions of authenticity (Rickly-Boyd, 2012). Similarly, existential authenticity, as proposed by Wang (1999), suggests that authenticity can be both *intra-* and *interpersonal*; that is to say, shared consumption experiences, and your relationship to fellow consumers, may affect the extent to which you experience something as authentic.

In terms of the findings of this thesis, Maria's experience in Canny Man suggests that she is seeking to increase her cultural capital, as evidenced by her saying that she is not "one of them *yet*" (emphasis added), but that she "like[s] the idea" of it. It is also interesting to note that she initially found Canny to be somewhat daunting for the very reason that she perceived it as somewhat socially impenetrable. This suggests that she was innately aware of what Bourdieu (1984) terms the 'competition' for social capital within this specific field of consumption. Amy's experience in the Abbotsford also places emphasis on her fellow consumers, but for different reasons – rather than feeling intimidated by them, or suggesting that she isn't one of them "yet" – Amy acknowledges an awkward if "familial" feeling between herself and her fellow consumers. This might suggest that, while Maria's goal was to increase her social capital in the building towards an ideal future self, Amy was content with feeling a sense of existential authenticity through the ability to see herself in fellow consumers.

In terms of the competition for capital within the field, it is interesting to note that *The Man's Fax* (2004), a fact sheet about the Canny Man written by a long established regular of the Canny upon request of Watson Kerr (grandson of the founder), explicitly acknowledges this. The *Fax* (2004: 7), which was formerly placed on every table but is now available at the bar and online, states that the service offered by the pub is "Good. A

well-run shop with respectable people to talk to. Those that you meet here will be those that Mr. Kerr would welcome to his own home and why not? This is his home.” It also acknowledges that field-specific cultural capital is needed to fully enjoy the experience, in stating “to fully understand this establishment you have to know and comprehend it. It is like a little cocoon. You are stepping back in time to when people had values.”

This again links back to Arsel & Thompson’s (2011: 793) conceptualisation of fields of consumption as “roughly equivalent to prior conceptualizations of subcultures of consumption,” and Leigh et al.’s (2006) notion that capital accrued within a sub-cultural setting is verified and leveraged for social standing through discourse within that subculture, which provides a source of authenticity. The above quote from the *Fax* suggests that this particular field of consumption does meet several common criteria of a subculture of consumption – there is a clear, if largely implicit hierarchy (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995), with Mr Kerr at the top (Fax, 2004); there are both *explicit* (through physical signage) and *implicit* (which comes down to the whims of management and whether they would ‘allow you into their home’) rules (cf. Kim & Jamal, 2007).

The contrasting experiences outlined above provide a potential avenue for future research, in so much as current studies in the consumption of authenticity have not explored variation in benefits derived within similar consumption context. The question raised is whether the authenticity derived from sites with higher perceived barriers, i.e. those which require a *higher* degree of field-specific cultural capital (Canny Man), is in some subjective way different, more valuable, than that derived from sites with *lower* ‘barriers’ (e.g. the Abbotsford, or Booking Office, Standing Order – also discussed in section 4.4).

5.3.1 Decommodifying Object-Inauthentic Experiences

The findings suggest that this provides a suitable lens for understanding the process of consuming authenticity in what for the purposes of this study has been dubbed *day-to-day* consumption settings, more specifically the pub. Section 4.6 explicitly discusses how the researcher, drawing on autoethnographic data, was found to utilise cultural capital to decommodify (Holt, 1998) an object-inauthentic offering, and extract from it a sense of authenticity. During a routine visit to the Hanging Bat (see section 4.3), my notes begin with a relatively scathing summary of the many object-inauthentic cues: the sense of a design and décor *meant* to elicit feelings of authenticity; items made to *look* rather than *being* old; my own knowledge of its relatively recent opening; alluding to a history, a ‘fly by the seat of your pants’ aesthetic when the reality is that the design was far more

deliberate. However, later during my visit, my notes placed emphasis on aspects of the consumption that conform to my own preference, and where my cultural capital could be leveraged – the selection of beer, the glasses used to serve it in, the knowledge of the staff. Where “beer is beer” to some consumers, my own process of connoisseurship involves leveraging knowledge of particular brewers, styles of beer, and being able to taste not just malt and hops, but the refreshing citrus crispness of Amarillo hops, or the mango sweetness of Citra.

This is in line with Arnould and Price’s (2000) argument that authenticity can be derived from inauthentic experiences through a process of *authenticating acts* – that is, self-referential behaviours related to the construction or reinforcement of one’s sense of self. Holt (1998) refers to this as *connoisseurship*, and argues that consumers with higher cultural capital extract authenticity not only from that which is inauthentic, but through idiosyncratic and subjective consumption practices.

5.3.2 Aspiring to Cultural Capital

Alongside authenticating acts, and as discussed in section 2.15, Arnould and Price (2000) present *authoritative performances* as another means of deriving authenticity from consumption. Where authenticating acts are solitary, authoritative performances are collective cultural displays and rituals that offer integration and a collective sense of identity amongst participants, and make explicit shared ideas values and ideas of subcultural significance. This relates to Arsel and Thompson’s (2004) conceptualisation of fields of consumption as less-defined subcultures, with associated value systems and social hierarchies. The findings of this thesis suggest that this played a role in Maria’s consumption of the Canny Man. What is of particular interest here is the explicitly *stated* hierarchies and, arguably, deliberate exclusion of such customers as are deemed inappropriate, as outlined in *The Man’s Fax* (2004). As discussed in section 4.5 in particular, the *Fax* outlines the social hierarchies of the Canny Man, and makes it explicitly clear that one must invest time, become a regular, before one can fully appreciate and – more or less explicitly – be accepted in the Canny Man. As the *Fax* was no longer placed on every table (as it used to be) when Maria started going to the Canny Man, she had not read it. Still, findings presented in section 4.5 highlight that Maria was able to *perceive* the social hierarchies, the imbedded and very much field-specific cultural capital, of Canny Man. It is also interesting to note that, unlike the example of my authenticating act in the previous section, where any benefit to leveraging my cultural capital is implicit, Maria *explicitly seeks* to increase hers, to meet the goal of becoming

an idealised future self. Increasing social capital in this sense is often treated in the literature as something that is implicit to the act of consumption, rather than explicitly stated (cf. Leigh et al., 2006; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2012). This finding fits particularly well with Holt (1998) and Beverland & Farrelley (2010), who stated that consumers seek out what they perceive to be authentic goods in the process of accruing cultural capital, for identity purposes.

Interestingly, it also conforms with MacCannell's (1973; 1976) strict object-authentic notion of the 'quest' for authenticity, whereby consumers are seen as seeking to escape the homogenisation of society caused by globalisation (Thompson et al., 2006). As discussed in section two of the literature review, the 'quest' for authenticity draws heavily on object-authentic logic to place emphasis on the widespread and unavoidable homogenisation of contemporary (or 'modern') Western society in particular. The general stance is that homogenisation and 'hyperreality' (Baudrillard, 1994 [1981]) have drained contemporary (postmodern) society of traditional sources of self-identity and meaning (Arnould & Price, 2000; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Thompson et al., 2006). According to MacCannell (1973; 1976), who initially first wrote of the quest for authenticity, consumers are left with no choice but to seek authenticity in (arguably mythologised) foreign experiences.

Maria's statement suggests that the quest for authenticity remains relevant to consumers, but as argued by Holt (1998) and Beverland & Farrelley (2010) in particular, they are able to leverage cultural capital to locate pockets of authenticity within broader society, in specific fields of consumption suited to their self-identity and self-identity goals. This is discussed further in section 5.4, which discusses findings in relation to how consumers perceive authenticity in pubs.

5.4 How Consumers Perceive Authenticity in Pubs

This thesis followed Kolar and Zabkar's (2010: 655) argument, and adopted an essentially "consumer-based perspective which fosters a more affirmative, nuanced, realistic and multi-conceptual investigation of tourist perceptions of behaviours." While their study focused on *tourism* as a context of consumption – as has been common in studies of authenticity (see section two of the literature review) – the literature presented the argument that a study based in this logic could meet the call for a better understanding of how and why consumers seek to, and do, consume authenticity (Napoli et al., 2014). Holt (1998) and Arsel and Thompson (2010), and their views on fields of consumption and

cultural capital in particular, were presented in section three of the literature review as an appropriate lens through which to view this consumption.

At the core of this view lies the focus on fields of consumption as re-conceptualised by Arsel and Thompson (2010). They argue for “conceptualising the field of consumption in fragmented terms, roughly equivalent to prior conceptualizations of subcultures of consumption [...]”. This conceptualisation provides “theoretical continuity with the Bourdieuan interest in the identity value that accrues from the acquisition and possession of (field-dependent) cultural and social capital” (Arsel & Thompson, 2011: 793). By drawing on the tenets of sub-cultures to inform their definition of fields of consumption, Arsel and Thompson argue in favour of viewing fields more narrowly – rather than viewing, for instance, *all* pubs as a homogenous field constituting essentially directly comparable venues, their view allows for each venue to be viewed as its *own field*. This further means that one can study each field in terms of its own individual discourses, value systems, practices and status functions (cf. Kozinets, 2002; Leigh et al., 2006; Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). This, in turn, allows for the idiosyncratic consumption as outlined by Holt (1998), whereby consumers utilise their field-dependent cultural capital to extract authenticity from what might on the surface appear to be an inauthentic offering, utilising a process of ‘connoisseurship’ to ‘decommodify’ the experience or product.

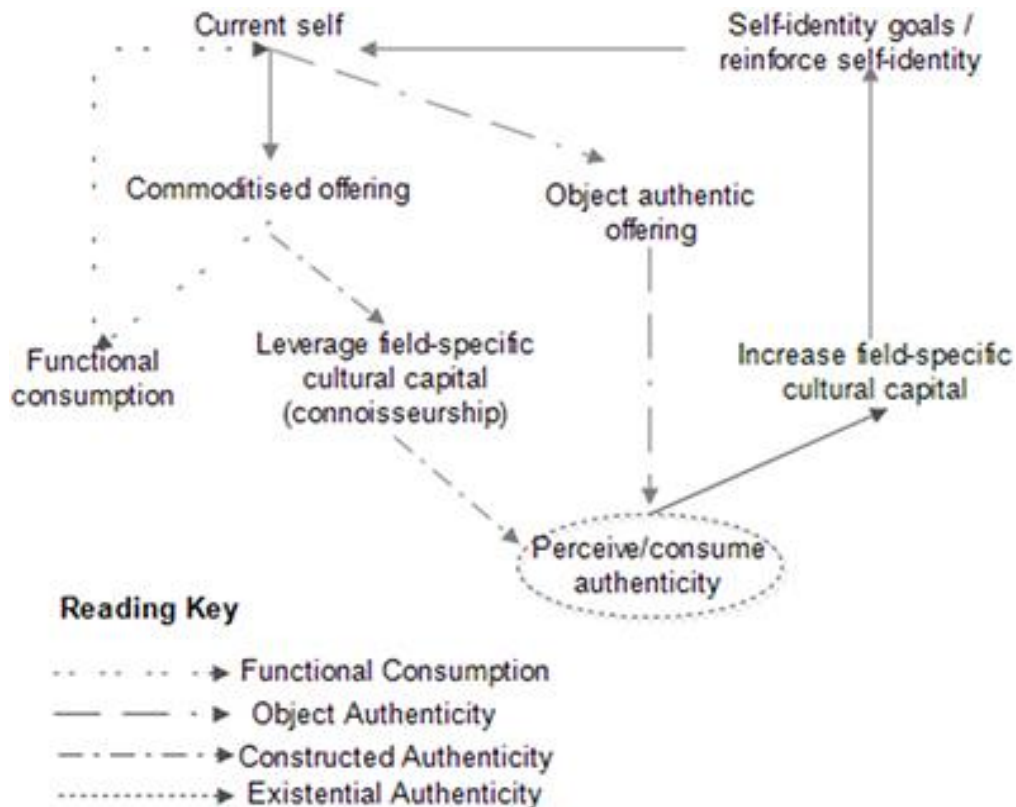
This goes against the traditional object-authentic logic of the quest for authenticity, as discussed in sections section two of the literature review, and briefly recounted in section 5.3.2 above. The traditional quest would suggest that consumers have to go *outside* of the homogenised ‘modern’ society on their quest, as contemporary society has been robbed of sources of authenticity (Arnould & Price, 2000), and such authenticity as perceived in contemporary society is but simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1994 [1981]), which robs it of its value (MacCannell, 1976). The findings of this thesis finds that object authenticity isn’t quite as important as these fundamental principles pervading the study of authenticity would suggest. As noted in section 5.3, the author found that constructed and existential authenticity – which hinged, in this instance, on the expectations of the consumer – might “override” the benefits of object authentic cues during the process of consumption.

The author’s consumption experience was affected by a series of cues that were not congruent with his expectations of Bennets – including unfamiliar bar staff and customers

who did not “fit” with his long-established expectations of the pub, and the presence of loud music. None of this would affect the *object* authenticity of Bennets – it is still considered authentic by experts (Trilling, 1972), and it was established long enough to have ‘roots’ in the community (Beverland, 2006; Zukin, 2010). However, viewed through the lens of constructed authenticity – whereby importance is placed on the extent to which a product/experience lives up to the expectations, stereotypes, and fantasies held by the individual consumer (Cohen, 1988; Bruner, 1994) – this experience in Bennets failed to meet the author’s expectations. The notes I took during this brief visit also seem to indicate a lack of existential authenticity, possibly fuelled by the shortcoming of constructed aspects. The four points noted in section 4.4, quoting from my autoethnographic research notes, suggest a set of expectations which failed to be met on this occasion, leading to my leaving the establishment in favour of another venue as I felt out of place. This relates to the notion that existential authenticity is derived from relationships, feelings and a sense of self (Rickly-Boyd, 2012) in the act of consumption (Knudsen & Waade, 2010). This experience suggests that *object* authenticity alone wasn’t sufficient for the consumption experience to be of personal meaning to me when constructed elements were out of sync with my expectations.

This can be linked back to the framework (Figure 2.3-4) developed through the literature review (re-produced below). The literature as summarised in this framework would suggest that object authenticity alone can be sufficient to reinforce current self-identity or meet future identity goals; indeed, studies of authenticity have often held the object conceptualisation as purer and more meaningful (Wang, 1999; Beverly & Farrelly, 2010). However, the literature, and subsequently the framework, does not account for the effects of *negative* authenticity from other sources. In this instance, the perceived lack of constructed authenticity negated the positive effects of object authenticity seemingly to the point where no value was derived.

Figure 2.3-4 – Bourdieu and the Consumption of Authenticity



While the consumer-centred stance of this thesis would thus, the surface, offer an argument that renders the notion of a ‘quest’ for authenticity obsolete, there is evidence to suggest that the term remains relevant to *how* consumers perceive authenticity. As suggested by Arsel and Thompson (2010), the findings of this thesis suggests that consumers perceive authenticity differently, and draw on field-specific capital (Holt, 1998), depending on the specific field of consumption they seek to visit. As touched upon on sections 4.5 and 5.3.2, Maria deliberately sought out the Canny Man because she identified in its offering a part of her idealised future self. She perceived the lives of those who frequented that particular pub as aspirational (*“It’s hard to say, but it’s like I see them all as having houses, you know, proper Morningside people [...] The idea is appealing though, the fantasy of it,”* and *“Now I can see myself as.. Not one of them yet, [...]”*). On a separate occasion, she also spoke of the Canny Man’s “unique character” and how it “different” and “more natural” than other pubs. As discussed in section 4.5, this suggests that Maria visits the Canny Man not only for its objective (it is classified as objectively authentic - see section 4.3) and constructed (see section 4.5 where Maria describes the pub) authenticity, but for the existential-authentic purpose of *feeling* more

aligned with an ideal self. An argument could be put forward here that this, somewhat paradoxically, makes the quest *more* relevant in an object-authentic sense. Proponents of the quest for authenticity have focused on travel, and consuming the authenticity imbedded in foreign experiences, but ultimately see this quest as futile (see MacCannell 1973, 1976; Cohen, 1988; Taylor, 2001). This is because the mere *presence* of the tourist, the ‘foreign’, at the point of consumption inevitably contributes to its inauthenticity (MacCannell, 1976). This problematisation is not present during the consumption of a resident local within an objectively authentic experience.

The author’s autoethnographic notes from the (object-inauthentic) *Hanging Bat* similarly suggests an underlying quest for a specific form of authentic experience in choosing to visit that particular field of consumption. Where Maria sought out readily available authenticity which aligned with an ideal future self, my visits to the Hanging Bat suggests a quest to a field of consumption that allows for the utilisation of *current* field-specific cultural capital, in that it enabled me to decommodify (Holt, 1998) an object-inauthentic offering through field-specific knowledge of brewers, beer, hops, and the paraphernalia of beer connoisseurship (see also Beverland, 2006). Despite acknowledging the strict object-inauthenticity, the specific field of consumption was important for sincere object-authentic (Cornet, 1975) reasons, as my autoethnographic notes highlight that I would not have enjoyed the beer as much in a chain venue such as Wetherspoons, and that part of the reason for this is that the independent Hanging Bat seems more ‘honest’ and the motives of the owner more personal. This essentially conforms with the constructed conceptualisation of authenticity (see section 2.10.2), thus providing initial evidence for this ‘route’ to consuming authenticity.

The above two examples from the findings of this thesis essentially conform to object-authentic (Maria, Canny Man), and constructed (Author, Hanging Bat) conceptualisations, though it must be acknowledged that both examples highlight the interrelationship between concepts. As seen in section 4.6, Maria also draws on constructed authenticity to further develop a sense of authenticity within the Canny Man, as she comments on the nature of the décor from a subjective perspective; and the author’s autoethnographic notes from the Hanging Bat comment not only on constructed authenticity, but the subjective feeling of the experience alluding to an ideal future self (see section 4.5) which aligns with existential authenticity (Wang, 1999).

The findings also suggests that *existential* authenticity can form the basis for a field-specific quest for authenticity, as evidenced by data from James in the Wetherspoons pub *The Standing Order*. Here, James explicitly acknowledges that he usually favours smaller pubs, and explicitly states that he tends to visit establishments because of their selection of gin and specific tonic water, for instance. This reveals that James perceives value in places where he can utilise his field-specific cultural capital (knowledge of gin, tonics, etc.), but on occasion seeks out the relatively simplicity of the Standing Order. He states that this is because he perceives establishments such as this to be more inclusive, and speculates that this is part of the deliberate design of their service. As such, while James acknowledges implicitly the inauthenticity of Wetherspoons and the Standing Order, his comment relates back to section 1.3, and the historic origins of the pub as a meeting place for local populace (Clarke et al., 1998), a traditionally social and inclusive consumption space (Maye et al., 2005). While James discusses this from an *existential* perspective, in the intangible sense of the space ‘feeling’ a particular way, this does allude to an objective ideal of the pub in the traditional sense as a ‘public house’.

In line with Arsel and Thompson (2011) and Holt (1998), these findings provide initial support for the position that consumers seek specific fields of consumption to meet specific identity benefits, through the consumption of field-specific authenticity. The findings thus suggest that *how* consumers perceive authenticity is very much field of consumption-dependent, and the evidence suggests that the choice of field in turn depends on the aspects of their current *or* ideal future self that they seek to confirm, or amass cultural capital to meet.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, Contributions, and Reflections

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the thesis by summarising key findings of the research, and highlighting avenues for future research. Section 6.2 recaps the aims and objectives of the study; section 6.3 discusses findings relating to the three main conceptualisations of authenticity and their interrelationship; section 6.4 discusses the value of field of consumption and cultural capital in understanding authenticity in everyday consumption; section 6.5 provides an overview of findings relating to how consumers perceive and consume authenticity; finally, section 6.6 discusses the limitations of this thesis, and presents avenues for future research.

6.2 Aims and Objectives

This thesis set out to answer Napoli et al.'s (2014) call for research to better understand the consumer experience of authenticity. To this end, the aim of this thesis was to “explore the relationship between field-dependent cultural capital and consumers’ process of consuming authenticity in day-to-day domestic consumption experiences.” To meet this aim, the following objectives were set out:

- Develop a more holistic understanding of authenticity through synthesising different conceptualisations
- To generate insight into the interrelationships between different conceptualisations of authenticity in the consumption process, and how they contribute to the consumer’s overall perception of authenticity.
- To develop an understanding of the role of field (of consumption)-specific cultural capital in the process of consuming authenticity
- Provide insight into *how* consumers perceive authenticity in a specific consumption context
- Identify the identity benefits consumers derive from the process of consuming authenticity

The study is placed within the wider literature of consumer culture theory, and draws on ethnographic research methods to gain an in-depth understanding of consumer practices (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, 2003). The British pub was put forward as a suitable research context on two grounds – its importance to the British economy, high employment, and

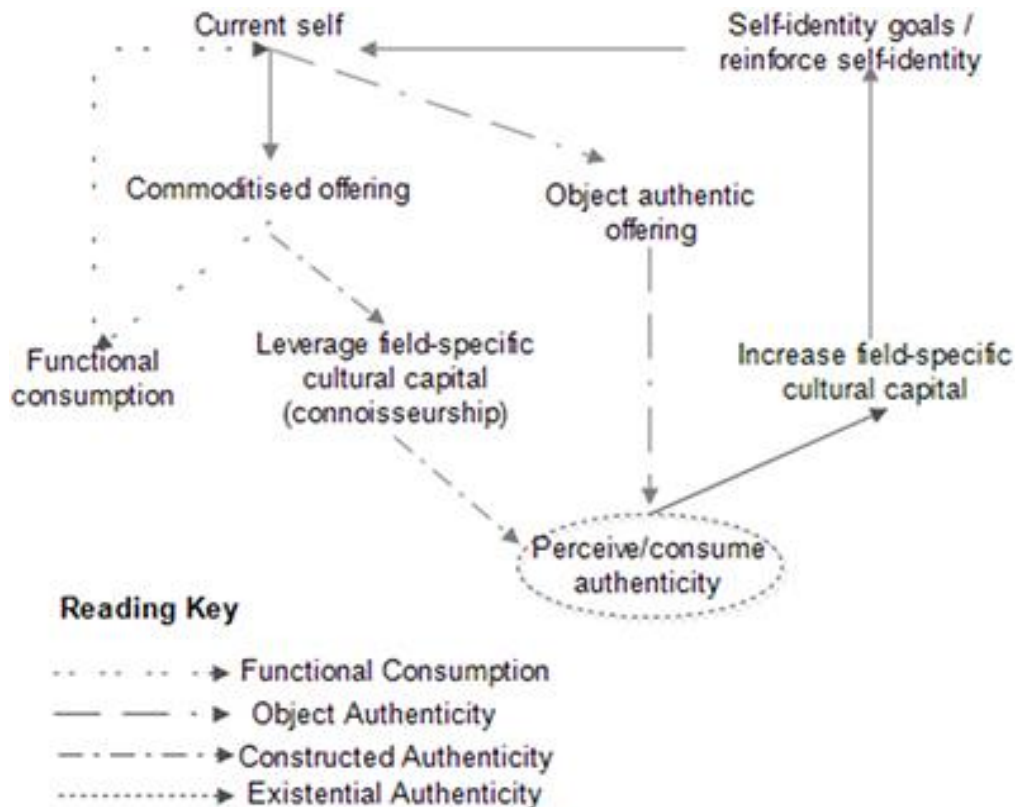
current difficult trading conditions (Mintel, 2016; Smithers, 2014) provide pragmatic justification, while its deep-rooted cultural and historic importance as a social consumption space (Brown and Patterson, 2000; Maye et al., 2005) provides a contextual ‘fit’ with the aim of exploring relatively mundane day-to-day consumption experiences. The study’s view of authenticity draws on Kolar and Zabkar’s (2010) view that theoretically differing conceptualisations of authenticity should be viewed as complementary *sources* thereof. The study further develops this theoretical stance by utilising Bourdieu’s (1984) theories of *cultural capital* and *fields of consumption*, as further developed by Holt (1998) and Arsel and Thompson (2010) as a lens through which to view the consumption of authenticity.

6.3 Conceptualisations and Interrelationship

The first objective of this thesis was to develop a more holistic understanding of authenticity through synthesising different conceptualisations. As discussed in section 2.7, the general stance has been that the three main conceptualisations of authenticity are fundamentally incompatible (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006). However, some authors have suggested that different conceptualisations may be theoretically linked. For instance, constructed (Buchmann et al., 2010) and object (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010) has been found to affect existential authenticity. This led Kolar and Zabkar (2010: 655) to “adopt the consumer-based perspective which fosters a more affirmative, nuanced, realistic and multi-conceptual investigation of tourist perceptions of behaviours.” In so doing, they viewed different conceptualisations as *complementary* and interrelated rather than conflicting, and suggested a model where object and existential authenticity are positively linked to increased consumer loyalty (see figure 2.1 in section 2.7).

Through a critical review of the literature, this thesis developed a new theoretical framework which further develops Kolar and Zabkar’s argument. The proposed framework at the conclusion of the literature review is presented in figure 2.3-4, below:

Figure 2.3-4 – Theoretical Framework



This framework includes such links as are evident in the current literature, while linking the motivation behind consumption to the final outcome of reinforcing current identity, or meeting some future identity goal. Identity is a widely-accepted outcome of consuming authenticity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006). A key contribution of the framework is the inclusion of *cultural capital* as a means of explaining both *how* consumers are able to decommodify objectively inauthentic experiences (Holt, 1998), and the link between consuming authenticity and meeting identity goals (Leigh et al., 2005; Arsel & Thompson, 2010).

This result of this thesis indicates that the above framework can partially explain the consumption of what was termed ‘everyday authenticity’, and each conceptualisation was found to explain certain aspect of said consumption. However, the findings also revealed a relationship that was not expected from reading the literature, in that different conceptualisations did not only *support* each other, but inauthenticity related to one conceptualisation was found to counteract authenticity from other sources. This was discussed in section 5.2, Specifically, the findings suggest that a failure to derive existential authenticity (i.e. the consumer feeling authentic as a result of the consumption experience; Wang, 1999) can lead to *negative* use of consumption techniques associated

with constructed authenticity, which in turn may negate even the benefits of object authenticity. This led to the development of a new interrelationship between these conceptualisations, as presented in figure 5.1 (section 5.2).

While this is an exploratory study, these findings suggest that further research is required into the complex and undoubtedly interconnected relationship between different conceptualisations of authenticity in consumption.

6.4 Field of Consumption and Cultural Capital

While the link between the consumption of authenticity and self-identity is widely accepted (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006), the question of *how* this relationship works has been relatively unexplored. This thesis drew on Bourdieu's (1984) notions of cultural capital and fields of consumption to explain the process by which the consumption of authenticity can be linked to self-identity, as well as how consumers are able to extract authenticity from an objectively inauthentic experience. Following the literature review, it was suggested that each individual field of consumption (pub, in this instance) should be viewed in isolation, with its own value systems, practices, and status functions (Arsel and Thompson, 2010). Within that context, it was suggested that consumers draw on field-specific cultural capital to decommodify the experience through a process of 'connoisseurship', whereby they leverage their cultural capital to extract authenticity through idiosyncratic consumption practices (Holt, 1998). This consumption, meanwhile, allows the consumer to amass *additional* cultural capital, thus working towards confirming current identity, or building towards some ideal future self (Holt, 1998; Buchmann et al., 2010).

The findings of this thesis suggest that this is a suitable lens through which to further explore the consumption of authenticity. Perceptions of cultural capital amongst fellow consumers was found to explain the choice of field in the case of one respondent, which provides some initial evidence for the link between the consumption of authenticity and identity goals. Autoethnographic evidence also suggested that consumers leverage their cultural capital to extract authenticity from an objectively inauthentic experience, as was suggested by the literature. Interestingly, the findings also suggest that the ability to leverage and/or amass cultural capital can be linked to the choice of field. One respondent was found to visit a specific pub with the express purpose of amassing cultural capital that would aid them in meeting an ideal future self (Maria, Canny Man), while the

researcher opted to visit the Hanging Bat as it provided the opportunity to leverage capital above and beyond the possibilities perceived as being available elsewhere.

This finding is particularly interesting as it hints at the continued relevance of the notion of a ‘quest’ for authenticity. As discussed in sections 2.9 and 5.3.2 in particular, the notion of the quest for authenticity is generally discussed in relation to object authenticity (MacCannell, 1973; 1976). Previous research has thus argued that consumers seek to escape the inauthenticity of contemporary society, and authenticity is seen as a theoretical ideal (ibid). However, this thesis suggests that authenticity not only *can* be extracted from experiences in contemporary society, but may guide our consumption choices.

6.5 Limitations and Future Research

This thesis aimed to further our understanding of authenticity, and the consumption thereof, in contemporary society. This led to the development of a theoretically informed research framework which brings together the three main conceptualisations of authenticity, thus furthering the work of Kolar & Zabkar (2010), which served as the basis for a study that has sought to answer Napoli et al.’s (2014) call for a study that helps better understand the benefits derived from consuming authenticity. However, it is acknowledged that this thesis has drawn on qualitative methods – predominantly ethnographic interviews and autoethnography – which severely limits the generalisability of findings. The study context – while rich in data – is also heavily culturally specific in its value to the British consumer, and may not resonate with a wider cultural context. Future study is thus required, and the framework developed in figure 2.3-4 might benefit from additional exploration in further contexts so as to establish its broader applicability to our understanding of authenticity as a concept within consumption. The study also found cultural capital to be a useful way of understanding the how and why of consuming authenticity, and the author suggests that this may serve as a means of bringing the notion of a ‘quest’ for authenticity in line with the existential and constructed notions of authenticity.

A final, and particularly interesting, outcome of this thesis is found in figure 5.1. As outlined in section 5.2, this figure presents a novel angle from which to explore the interrelationship between conceptualisations of authenticity. This thesis found evidence to suggest that *constructed* and *existential* authenticity may interact to diminish the value of previously appreciated (in the context) *object* authenticity. With the theoretical

dominance of object authenticity in the literature, this could prove an interesting ground for future research.

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Chapter 7: Appendices

Table 7.1 – Overview of Studies Exploring Authenticity Derived from Commoditised Products and Experiences

Date	Authors	Consumption Context	Methodology	Findings	Authenticity Concepts		
					Constructed	Existential	Object
2006	(Leigh et al., 2006)	<u>Consumption:</u> Subculture of MG owners	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnography • Participant observation • Informal conversations • Interviews • Document reviews (audio, visual and written) 	Participating in experiences and consuming objects perceives as authentic are linked to the construction of authentic self- and social identities.	✓	✓	✓
2007	(Kim & Jamal, 2007)	<u>Tourism:</u> Medieval renaissance festival	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnography • In-depth interviews • Participant observation 	Existential authenticity provides a sense of escape. It is connected on an intrapersonally to self-making, self-transformation and constructing self-identity. Interpersonally it is connected to communitas, social acceptance, and enduring social bonds.	✓	✓	
2010	(Beverland & Farrelly, 2010)	<u>Various:</u> Discussions around past experiences and photos	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	Perceptions of authenticity positively influence self-identity.	✓	✓	
2013	(Rickly-Boyd, 2013)	<u>Tourism:</u> Subculture of 'lifestyle climbers'	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-site ethnography • Single-site netnography 	Existential authenticity is connected to to self-discovery, and the construction of individual and collective identities (communitas).		✓	

Table 7.2 – Summary Table of Authenticity Value

Study	Context	Methodology	(In)dependent variables & findings	Types of authenticity present
(Brida et al., 2013)	<u>Tourism:</u> Christmas Markets	<u>Quantitative:</u> • Self-administered survey	<u>Independent:</u> Perceived authenticity of event and products sold <u>Dependent:</u> • Frequency of visit • Expenditure <u>Findings:</u> Perceptions of authenticity positively affected both frequency of visit and expenditure at the markets.	• Existential • Object
(Castéran & Roederer, 2013)	<u>Tourism:</u> Christmas Market	<u>Quantitative:</u> • Self-administered online survey	<u>Independent:</u> Perceived authenticity of event <u>Dependent:</u> Frequency of visit <u>Findings:</u> Perceived authenticity of event positively affects frequency of visit, which is translated into financial value.	• Object
(Chhabra et al., 2003)	<u>Tourism:</u> Scottish Highland Games event (in the United States)	<u>Quantitative:</u> • Self-administered survey	<u>Independent:</u> Perceived authenticity of event <u>Dependent:</u> • Overall event satisfaction • Expenditure	• Existential • Object

<p><u>Findings:</u> Perceived authenticity of event positively affected both overall event satisfaction and expenditure.</p>					
(Kolar & Zabkar, 2010)	Tourism: Romanesque heritage sites	Quantitative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewer-administered questionnaire 	Independent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Object-based authenticity Existential authenticity Dependent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyalty Findings: Both object-based and existential authenticity positively affect loyalty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existential Object 	
(Kovács et al., 2014)	Services: Restaurants	Quantitative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study 1: Content analysis of online restaurant reviews Study 2: experimental survey of fictitious restaurants 	Independent: Perceived authenticity of establishment and offerings Dependent: Perceived value Findings: Perceived authenticity positively affects perceived value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructe d 	
(Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011)	Tourism: Cultural and natural heritage sites	Quantitative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-administered survey 	Independent: Perceived authenticity Dependent: Behavioural intention to consume cultural attraction(s) Findings: Perceived authenticity positively affects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructe d 	

			intention to consume cultural attractions.	
(Robinson & Clifford, 2012)	<u>Tourism:</u> Medieval festival and food consumption	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary direct observation study <u>Quantitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewer-administered survey 	<u>Independent:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived event authenticity • Perceived food service authenticity <u>Dependent:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived event authenticity • Intention to revisit event • Intention to revisit event location • Event satisfaction <u>Findings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived foodservice authenticity positively affects overall authenticity perceptions • Perceptions of general event authenticity positively affect intentions to revisit event and location, and event satisfaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existential authenticity • Object authenticity
(Waller & Lea, 1998)	<u>Tourism:</u> Experimental survey of	<u>Qualitative:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary study to gauge perceptions of 	<u>Independent:</u> Perceived authenticity <u>Dependent:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructed • Object

holiday scenarios	<p>authenticity and predicted enjoyment based advertisements</p> <p><u>Quantitative:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two rounds of interviewer-administered questionnaires 	<p>Predicted enjoyment</p> <p><u>Findings:</u></p> <p>Perceived authenticity of holiday scenario positively affects predicted enjoyment.</p>
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Table 7.3 – Summary Overview of Table 7.2 Findings

	Constructed	Existential	Object
Intention to/frequency of revisit		Brida, Disegna et al. (2013); (Robinson & Clifford, 2012)	Brida, Disegna et al. (2013); (Castéran & Roederer, 2013); (Robinson & Clifford, 2012)
Expenditure		Brida, Disegna et al. (2013); (Chhabra et al., 2003)	Brida, Disegna et al. (2013)
Overall event satisfaction		(Chhabra et al., 2003); (Robinson & Clifford, 2012)	(Robinson & Clifford, 2012)
Loyalty		(Kolar & Zabkar, 2010)	(Kolar & Zabkar, 2010)
Perceived value	(Kovács et al., 2014)		
Behavioural intentions to consume	(Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011)		
Predicted enjoyment	(Waller & Lea, 1998)		(Waller & Lea, 1998)